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UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Frederick David Ronald Shipton

D.Phil.

BRITISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH AUSTRIA-
HUNGARY AND BRITISH ATTITUDES TO THE MONARCHY IN THE YEARS
1885-1918

ABSTRACT

The present thesis is an investigation into the relations between Great Britain and the Habsburg Monarchy (Austria-Hungary) in these years and how, in the words of Lord Rosebery in 1887 "the natural ally of Great Britain" became the enemy power of 1914 that had to be destroyed. Indeed, great emphasis is placed upon the key role that Britain played in the Monarchy's destruction. (One is reminded, en passant, of the poet William Cowper's admonition of 'love to hatred turned'.)

The first chapter will examine the general views held of the Monarchy by British travellers and commentators in the 19th and early 20th centuries, while Chapter II will focus on the views of the two greatest commentators on the Monarchy in the English-speaking world- the Slavonic scholar, Robert Seton-Watson and The Times Vienna correspondent, Henry Wickham Steed. Chapter III will deal with a general survey of Anglo-Austrian relations from the 1880's to the crisis years of 1908-9, involving the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which the subsequent chapter (IV) will examine in detail. Chapter V will look at the following years leading up to the First World War with particular reference to the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. Chapter VI (parts 1 and 2) will examine the July crisis and the actual outbreak of war and the attitude of people, press and parliament vis-à-vis the Monarchy when the two countries came to blows the following month in August, while the final chapter-VII- will stress the important part that Britain subsequently played in Austria-Hungary's overthrow. In particular great significance will be attached to Sir Edward Grey's failure in the years preceding the First World War to act as 'an honest broker' between the two great rival alliance systems of France and Russia and Austria-Hungary, Germany and Italy, and his willingness to accommodate Russia at Austria's expense. This led, it will be argued, to Germany effectively waging, initially, 'a preventive war' before her only real ally either disintegrated internally or was overthrown from without, hopelessly encircled as she was. (The very scenario that Grey claimed he feared the most actually happened largely through his failure to help Austria- the weakest link in the European alliance chain. The fact that the Foreign Office Memorandum of 1916 could argue "that the Austro-Hungarian Empire must come to an end if the causes of war in the future are to be effectively removed" was, it is argued, merely putting a gloss on an anti-Austrian British Realpolitik formulated in the years before the war broke out, even if not openly acknowledged as such.

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D. Phil. Thesis

A STUDY OF BRITISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
WITH THE HABSBURG MONARCHY/ AUSTRIA--
HUNGARY AND BRITISH ATTITUDES TOWARDS IT
IN THE YEARS 1885-1918

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PREFACE

I would like to extend my thanks to the various institutions and individuals that have helped me over the years while working on this thesis, particularly the staff of the Public Records Office, Kew Gardens and those of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies along with the staff of the University of Sussex Library. I would particularly like to offer my warmest thanks to Professor John Röhl for his support and encouragement in the carrying out of this dissertation and Professor Beryl Williams for her unstinting support over the years while I was having to deal with numerous problems of a personal and family nature. Without Beryl's untiring support this thesis would not have been completed. Along with my family and friends who have given me much financial and emotional support this dissertation is dedicated.

Additionally, I would also like to extend my warmest thanks to Dr. Paul Betts for his unstinting support and encouragement in the resubmitting of the thesis. Without his support and advice the work would not have been completed in its present form.

Frederick David Ronald Shipton

AUSTRIA-QUO VADIS?

What statesman inside or outside the Empire knows anything at all of the facts of Austria? It is a science in itself, nay, it is half a dozen sciences.

GRANT DUFF, THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, 1868.

But what is Austria? Is it fair
To name among the nations
Some Germans who have clutched the hair
Of divers populations,
And having clutched, keep tugging there?
On a cloth untrue, with a cue askew
and elliptical billiard balls.

DOGGERELS circa 1866-80.

Austria-Hungary is merely a dynastic group of properties.

HALFORD J. MACKINDER, THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, 1917.

It is a standing marvel that the country still holds together...Logically it should fall to pieces, but it does not.

SIR MAURICE de BUNSEN, 1913.

The Habsburg Empire is not the creaking mechanism which many persons suppose. It is a true political organism with a living soul.

LOTHROP STODDARD, 1917.

Our Habsburg state has actually put into practice, in miniature form, Victor Hugo's dream of a United States of Europe.

CROWN-PRINCE RUDOLPH, 1887.

Prussia has not enough body for her soul; Austria no soul for her very ample body.

PAULLAGARDE, 1853.

NOVISSIMA VERBA

Austria will be of little use to us as a friend, if she falls to pieces. One cannot steer with confidence by a star that may dissolve.

SIR EDWARD GREY, 1913.



FRANZ JOSEPH, EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY AND GREAT BRITAIN

1885-1914

FROM FRIEND TO FOE

INTRODUCTION

In August 1914 Great Britain found herself at war with one of her oldest traditional allies- the multi-national empire of the Habsburg Monarchy- and it will be the purpose of this present thesis to examine in extenso why and how this *prima facie* remarkable volte face took place. Given that for over two centuries Austria had been regarded as 'England's dagger on the Continent of Europe' it is somewhat surprising, to say the least, that comparatively little has been written on the subject of Anglo-Austrian relations with the notable exception of A.F. Pribram from the Austrian side and F.R. Bridge on the part of Britain.(1) Although there has been an abundance of material published on the origins of the First World War the quasi-Götterdämmerung dénouement in the breakdown of relations between the two countries leading to conflict has been mainly refracted through the prism of Britain's deteriorating relationship with Imperial Germany and her Weltmachtpolitik.

To begin with, before examining this literature, it may be said that for many years contacts between the Austrian Empire and the island kingdom of Great Britain were of limited nature and of little practical significance since their widely distinct geographical positions and sharply divergent political and economic interests rarely brought them into association with one another: after all, one was a land-based Central European power and the other a maritime power par excellence. Indeed, were it not for the aura of wonder that surrounded the personality of the Emperor Franz Joseph on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday in August 1905, "the two empires might", as the London Standard noted, "conceivably remain indifferent to one another".(2) In fact, it was not until the advent of the 'Balance of Power' which in the words of Bishop Stubbs "is the principle which gives unity to the political plot of modern European history"(3) - became the axiom of British foreign policy that the Habsburg Empire came to assume an increasingly important role in the eyes of British statesmen, anxious as they were to ensure that no single power should gain a position of hegemony on the EUROPEAN

continent. In modern times Napoleon Bonaparte's attempts to achieve such dominance convinced the Foreign Ministers of both Austria and Britain- Prinz Klemens von Metternich and Lord Castlereagh- that however diverse the backgrounds and the histories of their respective countries might be, they had this one great interest in common.(4) Moreover, ever since the Congress of Vienna in 1815 the Habsburg Empire had been seen as a useful counterpoise to Tsarist Russia in European affairs, particularly as this affected the Balkan peninsula and the Near East. It appeared that the defeat of Napoleonic France had merely substituted one *bête noire* with another- this time in the form of the great Slav autocracy in the East. Thus, as a consequence of this mutual concern for the 'Balance of Power' 'a traditional friendship' developed which was poignantly depicted by no less than 'gun-boat' Palmerston himself in 1849 as follows:

Austria has been our ally. We have been allied with Austria in most important European transactions, and the remembrance of an alliance (against France) ought undoubtably to create in the breast of every Englishman who has a recollection of the history of this country feelings of respect towards a power with whom we have been in alliance...Austria is a power that forms a most important element in the balance of European power. Austria stands in the centre of Europe, a barrier against encroachment on the one side(France) and against invasion on the other.(Russia) The political liberties and independence of Europe are bound up, in my opinion, with the maintenance and integrity of Austria as a great European power, and therefore anything which tends by direct or even remote contingency to wreck and cripple Austria, but still more to reduce her from the position of a first-rate power to that of a second-rate state, must be a great calamity to Europe which every Englishman ought to deprecate and try to prevent.(5)

Palmerston's eloquent *apologia pro vita sua* did not, however, inhibit him from condemning Austria's essentially reactionary role in Italy, notably her vehement opposition to the Risorgimento and the movement for Italian unity. As a result there was a marked cooling in relations between the two countries around the year 1850; however, when Palmerston resigned towards the end of 1851 his successor Lord Malmesbury tried to 'mend the fences' as soon as possible, writing to the Austrian Foreign Minister, Count Buol on March 15th 1852:

In proportion to the value which H.M. Government place upon the maintenance of a cordial friendship with Austria, the oldest ally of England, cemented not only by the tie of mutual interest, but by the recollection of past efforts in a common cause (against Napoleon) the regret with which H.M. present Government on succeeding to office found that the result of the last years (the 1848 revolutions) had been to substitute for those friendly relations a tone of mutual suspicion, if not actual alienation, and to give their diplomatic correspondence a character quite at variance with the dispositions which ought to exist between them.(6)

About a year later a well-known Austrophile, Lord Aberdeen, wrote to his close friend, Lord Clarendon, that friendship with Austria was of supreme importance to Great Britain for "highly practical reasons", declaring:

I think that the greatest misfortune of the present day is our alienation from Austria. It is an entirely new feature in our foreign policy, and changes all our calculations. Austria is a state with which I should have thought it impossible to quarrel, and however desirable to be on the best of terms with France and Russia, is the only Power on whose friendship I should have thought we could confidently rely. Our first object ought to be to convince the Austrian government of our sincerity and to lead them to believe that we have no object in view but their own real welfare.(7)

With the victory of the Italian national movement in 1859-60 and the resolution of the hitherto intractable problem of the Danish controlled Elbian duchies of Schleswig-Holstein in 1863-4, in which Britain and Austria found themselves on opposing sides, the former good relations between the two states were restored. (In the latter case, Palmerston had quipped that "only three people have ever understood it: Prince Albert and he is dead; a professor at Göttingen university and he went mad and myself- and I have completely forgotten what it was.") Lord Salisbury was to echo Palmerston's sentiments in October 1879 when he remarked that "in the strength and independence of Austria lie the best hopes of European peace and stability." (8) This favourable attitude towards the Monarchy was fully shared by the well-known conservative historian, Lord Acton, who roundly declared that the multi-national Habsburg state was of paramount importance for European civilization, and unlike many Liberals, enamoured with the modern Zeitgeist of Nationalism, Acton declared that "the theory of nationality is a retrograde step in history" while "the co-existence of several nations under the same state is a test, as well as the best security of its

As far as the last decade of the 19th century was concerned the focal point of mutual interest and common concern became the Balkan Peninsula and the Near East- the direct result of the continuing decline of the Ottoman Empire- the so-called "Sick Man of Europe". For centuries, ever since a Russian Tsar had married the niece of the last Byzantine Emperor Russia had claimed to inherit the mantle of the defunct Eastern Orthodox Empire and her designs on the Ottoman capital, Constantinople and the Straits- the gateway to the Eastern Mediterranean were well-known. Russian egress to the Mediterranean was viewed by British statesmen as a potential threat to Britain's line of communication with India via Egypt and by Austria-hungary as part of a wider Russian plan for the encirclement of the Monarchy to the south in conjunction with the newly independent Balkan States such as Serbia. This co-operation in the Near East was not without a certain degree of suspicion on the Austrian side since the Monarchy's statesmen often gained the impression that their role was that of 'a cat's paw' given that the British were traditionally known for their aversion to alliances and mutually binding agreements.

Undoubtedly the most important diplomatic event of the 1870's was the Congress of Berlin in 1878 which was concerned specifically with Balkan affairs and as a result of co-ordinated action between Britain and the Monarchy was to register striking gains for both powers. Both Austria and Britain had been gravely alarmed by Russia's resounding defeat of the Ottoman Turks in the war of 1877-78 and her subsequent plan for the creation of a large independent Bulgarian state which would have extended from the Danube in the north to the Aegean in the south and almost to the Adriatic in the west. (Fig. 1) Such a state, as envisaged by the harsh terms imposed on Turkey at San Stefano in March 1878, was seen by both Britain and Austria as nothing less than a Russian satellite giving access by proxy, as it were, to the Straits and ultimately the Mediterranean. As a result, at the suggestion of Lord Salisbury, a congress of all the major powers was summoned to Berlin where under the aegis of the the 'Iron Chancellor' Otto von Bismarck, acting the role of the so-called 'honest broker', all Russia's recent gains were subjected to fundamental revision and effectively emasculated. (June-July). The projected 'Great Bulgaria' was first of all reduced by two

Bulgaria according to the Berlin Congress 1878

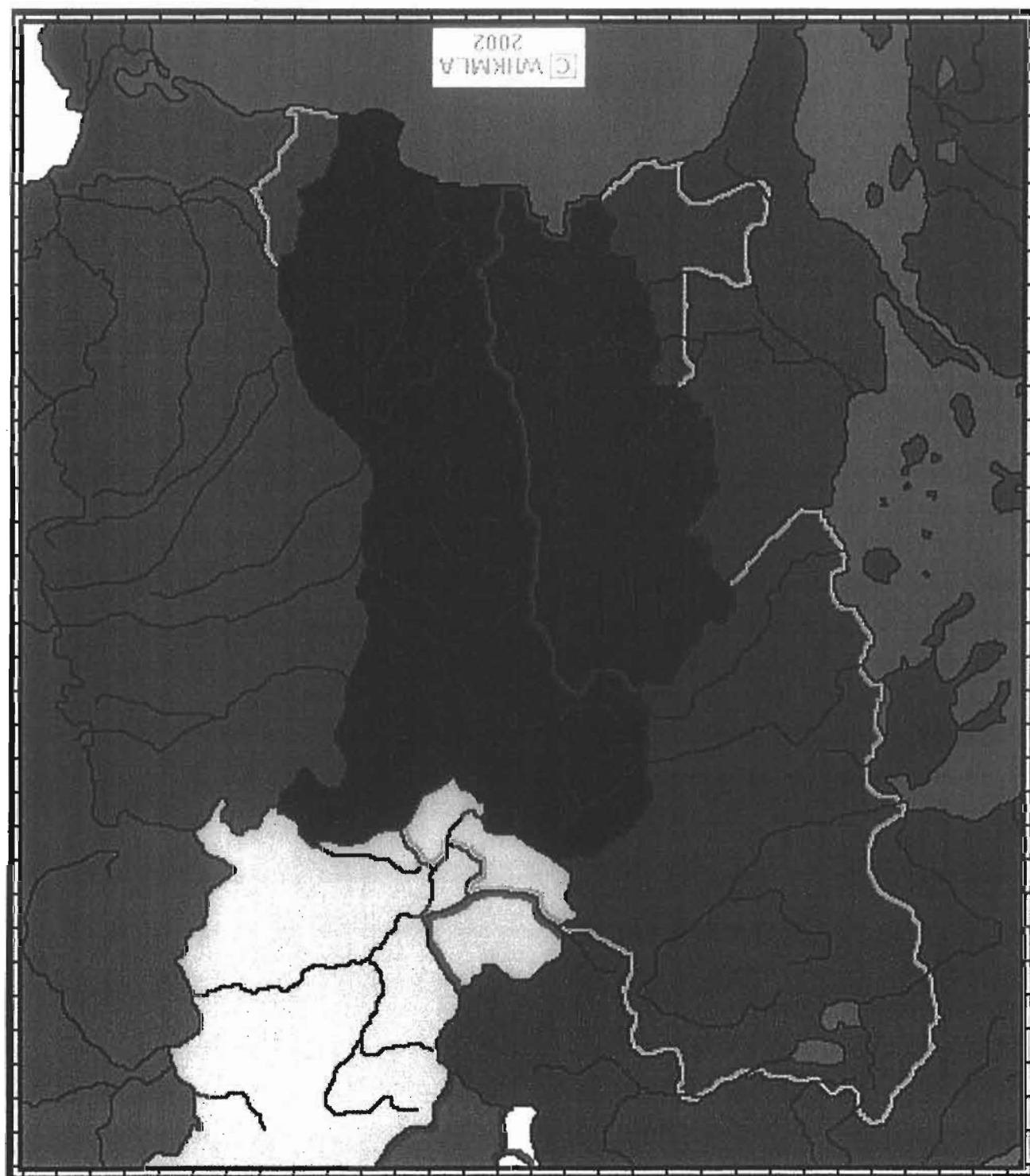
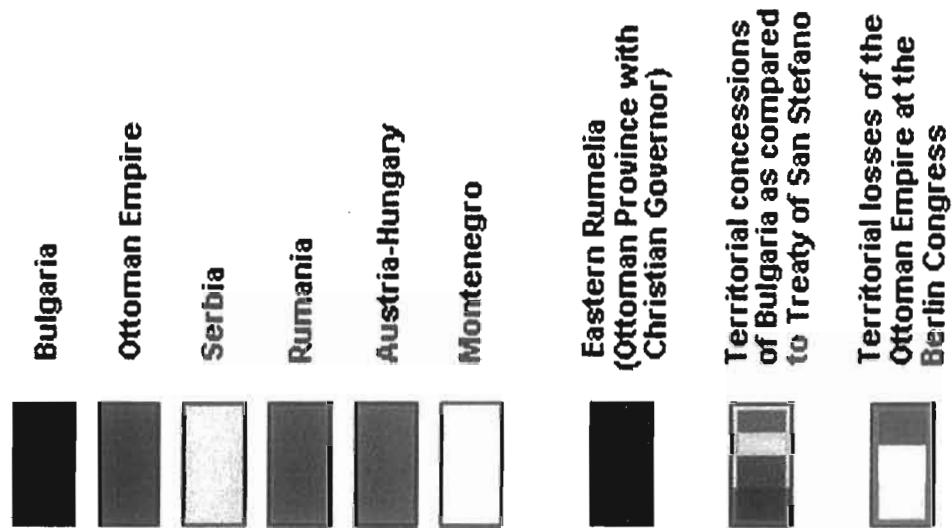


FIGURE 1.

thirds and then further divided into two-Southern Bulgaria or Eastern Roumelia remaining under the direct control of the Ottoman Sultan and only the area north of the Rhodope Mountains was to be styled as an 'autonomous principality'.(Fig.1) Thanks to close and effective co-operation between the two powers Austria was given the right to administer the two north-western provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where a bloody revolt against the Turks had broken out, as well as the Sandjak of Novi Bazaar, while Britain secured the cession of the island of Cypress, a strategic 'staging-post' on the route to India. From the Ottoman's point of view it must have seemed that having friends like Britain and Austria was scarcely a spectacular improvement on having Russia as an avowed enemy since the price of their support was a heavy one. All in all, the Congress of Berlin proved to be a humiliating rebuff for Russia which had suffered enormous casualties in the war against Turkey on the Bulgarians' behalf, while being a great diplomatic and material triumph for both Austria and Britain that had played no part in the war at all. A sense of *déjà vu* must have pervaded many a Russian mind recalling the disaster of the Crimean War some twenty three years before in which prospective gains from Turkey had been snatched away by British(inter alios) intervention and Austrian hostility under the thin guise of 'neutrality.' It was, thus, not just a case of 'Vae Victis!'(Woe to the Conquered!) but 'Vae Victoribus! too.

In spite of the British Prime Minister William Gladstone's observation that "the Habsburg Empire was merely a brilliant second of the German Empire" (later echoed by the German Kaiser himself- "Austria was a brilliant second on the duelling-ground") and his caustic remark that "there was no place on the ~~map~~ where one could say:'Here Austria did good!'" (10), nevertheless the last twenty years of the 19th century were to prove to be the most co-operative between the two countries yet.

However, before embarking on a detailed examination of this relationship it will be as well as to look at some of the historiography of this period under review.

It is a marked fact- as strange as it is true- that very little has been written about Anglo-Austrian relations, apart from by the authors previously mentioned (A. Pribram and F.

Bridge), and it is essential to return to the contemporary literature- a full synopsis of which is given in the bibliography at the end of the thesis. The only notable exception to this is to be found in the period immediately before the First World War when the escalating conflict between Austria and Serbia focused, nolens volens, greater attention on the respective attitudes of Britain and Austria-Hungary vis-à-vis one another in the context of a potentially much more destructive conflagration between the Great Powers themselves, given the nature of the international alliance system. Behind Serbia stood Russia and behind Austria Germany. A war between Germany and Russia, however, would also activate the *casus foederis* of the Franco-Russian Alliance, potentially embroiling too, Italy, as the third component of the Triple Alliance- although few Austrians would have illusions about Italian assistance.

Notwithstanding the impressive evidence that has been marshalled to substantiate Germany's paramount 'war-guilt', which is the leitmotif of Fritz Fischer's work in particular- 'Griff nach der Weltmacht', 'Germany's Aims in the First World War', 'Krieg der Illusionen'(11)- it is, nevertheless, important to stress, as F. Bridge asserts, that Austro-Hungarian policy was not made in Berlin(12), as the British Foreign Office chose to believe..And while it is true to say, as Samuel Williamson maintains, that "the steps that pushed Europe towards war were taken in Vienna"(13), neither Russia nor France- nor more importantly from our purposes here- Britain- can be exculpated either. While the common finance minister, Ritter von Bilinski candidly admitted that "we decided on war quite early, that was right at the start"(14) and the diplomat, Leopold Baron von Andrian-Werburg emphatically declared: "We started the war, not the Germans and even less the Entente- that I know"(15), nevertheless, Austria did not so much paint herself into a corner in July 1914, but rather she was painted into it, in which Britain had a leading part. Only Paul Schroeder in his perspicacious and provocative article 'World War 1 as Galloping Gertie' seems to fully appreciate the dynamics of this scenario when he says: "Both German and Entente policies have always been discussed almost

exclusively in terms of the German problem, when, in fact, their effects were far greater on the 'Austrian problem.' Indeed, it can be cogently argued, as he says, that "the Entente really encircled Austria rather than Germany. Austria was hopelessly encircled by 1914 and knew it." (16) All in all, it should not be forgotten that, as Joachim Remak notes, "The First World War began as The Third Balkan War" (17) - just as its dénouement was to prove that it had been effectively "The Second War of The Austrian Succession." (18) In this connection it is somewhat curious to observe that while reference has often been made in the works of such authors as C.A. MacCartney (19) to 'the successor states' created out of the corpus delicti of the Monarchy, the war per se has signally failed to have been seen as 'a war of succession.', overshadowed as it was by the wider European conflict.

Gordon Tunstall Junior has drawn attention to the widespread encircling of the Monarchy by Russia and the Balkan states in his article on Austria-Hungary in the symposium 'The Origins of the First World War' but without examining Britain's possible role in it - either by passive or active design. (20) While Paul Schroeder has concluded that "there was no great anti-Austrian plot" and that Britain merely "assisted in her destruction during the war" having "undermined it before..in a fit of absence of mind" (21), there is considerable reason to believe that the situation was a little more sanguine than that - for as one contemporary Austrian observer, Joseph Redlich, noted in April 1913:

Austria-Hungary is seen as being very weak, but even so as highly awkward again - above all in connection with Germany whose satellite she appears to be. In London they would gladly see the Monarchy shattered for the ideal of English policy is in the formation of small states which can be played against each other." (22)

-A complete reversal of Balance of Power policy, one might add. Indeed, when it came to the crunch Sir Edward Grey proved to be only too willing to sacrifice Austria's vital strategic interests in the Balkans in order to further the 1907 Entente with Russia, not least of all because to embroil Russia in the Balkans was to distract her from threatening British interests in Central Asia and elsewhere i.e. India, Persia, Tibet etc., as both

L.C.F. Turner and John Lowe have pointed out.(23) This scenario is particularly emphasized by Keith Wilson in his 'Policy of the Entente: Essays on the Determinants of British Foreign Policy, 1904-1914'(24), Grey was, in fact, echoing the previous sentiments of Sir Charles Hardinge who had welcomed the breakdown of the Austro-Hungarian condominium over Macedonia, saying in a letter to Sir Edward Goschen on April 7th 1908 that "the ~~Mürz~~steg programme is as dead as a door-nail."(25) Two months earlier, on February 4th 1908, he had been even more sanguine, minuting a despatch by Sir Arthur Nicolson to Grey with the words: "The struggle between Austria and Russia in the Balkans is evidently now beginning and we shall not now be bothered by Russia in Asia. The action by Aehrenthal(vis-à-vis the Sandjak Railway Project) will make Russia lean more and more on us in the future and this will not be a bad thing."(26) The potential danger involved by a conflict between Austria and Russia in the Balkans- which was after all Austria's 'back-yard'- did not seem to worry Hardinge unduly, even though it was to prove somewhat more than the classic English understatement of "not a bad thing" but rather in the nature of 'a catastrophic thing.'

It is an old and recognized legal maxim that 'Qui tacet consentire'- he who is silent, gives consent- indicating that silence or passivity while a deleterious act is being carried out is to make oneself culpable as an accomplice of the perpetrator of such an action- and one might say it is-mutatis mutandis- also applicable here in a political context. Sir Edward Grey, as with all other European statesmen, was fully aware that Austria with multitude of domestic problems was by far the weakest link in the chain as far as the balance of power in Europe was concerned(27) but he never seriously entertained any effective, positive steps to help her, either directly or indirectly by urging restraint upon Russia and France who were known to be formenting another Balkan League against her. As A.J.P. Taylor has underlined: "The victory of Balkan nationalism (over the Turks) WAS A DISASTER beyond remedy for the Habsburg Monarchy."(28)

Arguably, Germany's failure to support Austria during the Balkan Wars- particularly "in allowing Bulgaria to be crushed by her erstwhile allies"(29), as Turner puts it, was to prove a fatal miscalculation for the balance of power in both Europe and the

Balkans was now irrevocably disturbed. Indeed, it can be cogently argued that if Germany had supported her ally at this juncture in aiding Bulgaria- the only Balkan state save Greece with no irredentist claims against the Monarchy- then Serbia could have been effectively constrained if not crushed. Such a scenario would then have obviated 'the need' in Austria's mind for 'a third Balkan war to redress the balance of power destroyed by the Treaty of Bucharest, confirming Serbian ascendancy in the summer of 1913; or as Franz Joseph himself, despairingly put it: "The Treaty of Bucharest is untenable and we are moving towards another war. May God grant that it is confined to the Balkans!" (30)- Alas, no, as events were to prove.

Annika Mombauer has argued that Germany's decision makers were looking for an "effective casus belli" and "that a perfect set-up would be a Balkan crisis" but this would not appear to have been the case in 1912/3, even though the chances of success would have been (arguably) much more favourable than in July 1914. (31) As Paul Schroeder points out no-one wanted to help Austria per se- even her ally Germany desired to use her for her own ends (as Aehrenthal suspected and guarded against- again contrary to British belief.)(32). However, what makes Britain's role particularly reprehensible is that "Britain alone was in a position to manage the European concert to control the Balkan situation"(33) Britain was technically not a member of either of the two rival Alliance systems (The Triple Alliance and the Franco-Russian) but there can be no doubt that she was heavily compromised by her 'Ententes'('understandings') with France(1904) and Russia(1907). Niall Ferguson is surely right to claim that ever since Grey held the tenure of the Foreign Office from January 1906 onwards, he allowed ever closer relations to develop between the British and French military staffs directed explicitly against Germany and, by extension, indirectly- at her chief ally, Austria. Grey's attitude can be succinctly expressed as: "Do what you have to do, but don't tell me the details- that way I won't have to deliberately lie to parliament or press."(34)

Although Mark Hewitson rejects Niall Ferguson's "ingenious but implausible argument" that British planners had "set the

course for a military confrontation" at the Committee of Imperial Defence meeting on August 23rd 1911(35)(which, incidentally involved the violation of both Belgian and Dutch neutrality F.S.) when the decision to join France in a war against Germany was made(36), since Britain had not actually pledged her support for an "offensive" or "aggressive war" against Germany, nevertheless such a rebuttal does not, Mark Hewitson observes, "answer the broader charge brought by Paul Schroeder and David Calleo that the Entente should have made greater efforts to accommodate a recently unified and expanding German nation state."(37)

Surely, however, the answer to this is that the Entente had no intention of doing so since this would have been contrary to their perceived interests. Stars already established in the firmament have generally little inclination to accommodate 'rising suns' but a marked disposition to block them out- to 'encircle' them out. If the 'Einkreisung' of Germany and, by extension, her ally Austria was not a conscious British aim their 'Auskreisung' ('encircling out') definitely was- hence Grey's tacit if not overt support for Russia's Balkan policies, however injurious to Austria they might be.(38)

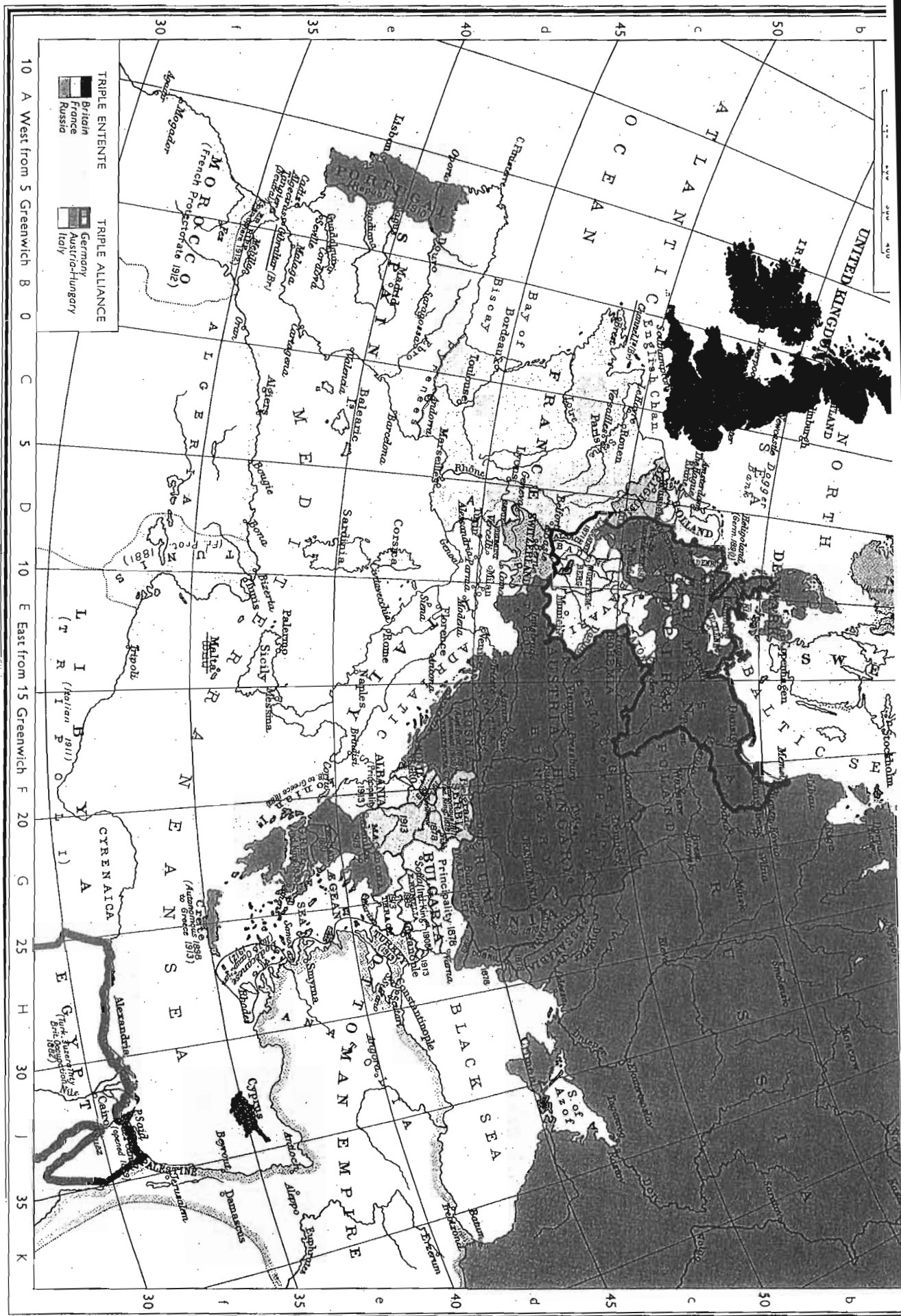
Perhaps the most persuasive argument for Britain's large degree of responsibility for the outbreak of war lies in Grey's failure to make Britain's position sufficiently clear: ambiguity and evasiveness have been the hall-mark of British diplomacy in French eyes for a long time- hence the epithet 'Perfide Albion', which was indeed to be echoed by the French ambassador, Paul Cambon at the very height of the July crisis.(39) No-one quite knew precisely where Britain stood- neither the French, the Germans, nor for that matter the Austrians either. It is more than plausible, however, that if Grey had given a blunt warning of the likelihood of British involvement on July 26th then it is likely that the German Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg could have been deterred from urging the Austrian Foreign Minister Count Berchtold from launching his premature declaration of war on Serbia. Premature, since even the ultra-belligerent Austrian Chief of the General Staff Conrad von Hötzendorff had admitted that the army would scarcely be prepared for operations until

August 12th at the earliest, given that many of the troops were on 'harvest leave' and therefore, effectively, hors de combat- so to speak. Thus, a declaration at this juncture was not only unnecessary but, militarily, impossible to execute. (Indeed Luigi Albertini, whose magnum opus published some 70 years ago (1942) but is still recognized as a seminal work- The Origins of the War of 1914 (3 vols), comments: "Austria declared war on Serbia against the advice of the Austrian Chief of Staff under German pressure." (40))

Grey, however, was not to issue any specific warning of almost certain involvement by Britain in a general war until July 29th. Keith Wilson in his article 'Britain' for the symposium Decisions for War (also edited by him) has drawn attention to this remarkable ambivalence on Grey's part, saying both to the German ambassador: "Don't count on our abstention" and to the French ambassador: "Don't count on our coming in." This Sphinx- (41) like inscrutability was to be further enhanced when he told the latter, Paul Cambon, after "the critical cabinet" of July 29th:

In the present case the dispute between Austria and Serbia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand. Even if the question became one between Austria and Russia we should not feel called upon to take a hand in it.. If Germany became involved and France became involved, we had not made up our minds what we should do; it was a case that we should have to consider. (42)

It has been said in Grey's defence that he was constitutionally prohibited from making a forthright declaration without prior Cabinet approval but in his démarche to Prince Lichnowsky late on July 29th this is precisely what he did. Extraordinarily, too, given the gravity of the international situation after the issuing of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia on July 23rd- which in his own words "was the most formidable document dispatched from one state to another that was independent" (43), Grey saw fit to depart for his usual weekend in the country on the afternoon of Friday July 25th, thus making it difficult to have warned Germany on the 26th. Grey's behaviour seems to be questionable on many accounts, even extending to the several mediation efforts, he made, albeit belatedly, as John Lowe points out. (44) What never ceases to amaze however, is the latitude extended to Grey throughout his period



of office by the other members of the Cabinet even in extremists who, with the exception of Lord Ripon, the Liberal leader in the Lords, knew little of foreign affairs and never really held him to account for anything. If it is true, as Zara Steiner alleges "the German riddle was hard to read"(45), echoing the sentiments of the diplomat Spring-Rice in 1904 when he commented:"Germany is a mystery. Does she want the destruction of England, pure and simple..or does she want definite things which England can help her get?"(46) Surely the same question could be asked of Grey and British policy by Germany and Austria? After all, in Zara Steiner's words again:"Germany was left with sufficient doubt as to encourage dangerous illusions."(47)

While Grey was to offer as his apologia pro vita sua the following:"If we did not stand by France and stand up for Belgium against this aggression, we should be isolated,discredited and hated"(48), Prince Lichnowsky was to offer his own caveat to this, saying:"Belgium was not the reason for Britain's action but merely the occasion for it, since it had been known in England since 1905 that we intended to violate Belgian neutrality."(as (49) did Britain, one might add.) More prosaically perhaps, Zara Steiner suggests, "Grey feared a German victory in Western Europe would threaten her safety and her empire"(50), which would accord with Paul Schroeder's view that even if Germany's encirclement was not a British aim, "the 'circling out' of Germany, her exclusion from world politics and empire to protect her own empire was Britain's goal in good measure."(51)

PART II

At this juncture it may be useful to give a brief synopsis of the major dramatic personae involved in the diplomatic relations between the two countries, Austria-Hungary and Great Britain. Although political life was becoming more and more 'democratized' in this period 1885-1914 in both empires- more so in Britain, less so in Austria-Hungary with the growth of political parties, development of the press and the pressure of an increasingly articulate public opinion, diplomats, the leading spokesmen in public and government affairs were, in the main, still drawn from a comparatively restricted social élite of

aristocratic and upper middle-class lineage. Counts seemed 'to count' so to speak in Austria-Hungary, while Lords and Sirs proliferated in the upper echelons of British government circles- in both domestic and foreign affairs alike- in the case of Britain. Whatever their great differences in other respects a patent of nobility was de rigueur in both states and this undoubtedly coloured their respective Weltanschauungen accordingly.(52)

In Austria-Hungary the key figure was indisputably the venerable Habsburg Emperor, Franz Joseph I, who, unlike his British counterparts, Victoria, Edward VII and George V, ruled as well as reigned; and indeed, his control over foreign policy- a special Imperial prerogative- was to remain basically unchanged even after the great constitutional Wendepunkt of the Ausgleich with the Magyar nobility of 1867, which transformed the Austrian Empire into the Dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary, creating a largely autonomous Hungarian kingdom. According to Sir Horace Rumbold, the British ambassador in Vienna (1896-1900) by the beginning of the new century, Franz Joseph was showing "signs of senility",⁽⁵³⁾ which was scarcely surprising, as the 'Alter Herr im Hofburg', as he was affectionately known, had been on the throne for some 52 years. However, his steadfast refusal to bow to the demands of the Magyar nobility in 1905-6 for a separate Hungarian army-"united my common army is and united it will remain"- and his strong support for universal suffrage in Austria in 1907, demonstrated clearly that he was "still vigorous in mind." (54) When the Chief of the Austrian General Staff, Conrad von Hötzendorff, attempted to challenge Count Aehrenthal's conduct of foreign policy, he was, unceremoniously, struck down, the Emperor declaring that Aehrenthal was merely "Mein Minister carrying out meine Politik" and this was "eine Politik des Friedens." (55)

Franz Joseph had an excellent rapport with the British Royal Family, but, unlike Edward VII, for example, never let personal friendships influence policy and staunchly supported Aehrenthal in his dispute with Britain in 1908-9. During the Boer War (1899-1902), Franz Joseph sided strongly with Britain, much to the chagrin of Austria's principal ally, Germany, whose predilection for the Boers, particularly on the part of the

Kaiser, Wilhelm II, was well-known. At a court ball in Vienna he declared in front of the German ambassador: "Dans cette guerre je suis complètement anglais" (56) and later he facilitated the sale of prime Magyar horses to South Africa for the use of the British army against the Boer Kommandos. Although the Bosnian Crisis was to temporarily sour the cordial relations that had existed between Franz Joseph and Edward VII, who had been in the habit of meeting almost annually, by 1910 the old amity had been more or less restored. Edward VII's death that year caused the old Emperor some distress. Although Franz Joseph was to speak of his successor, George V, affectionately, there was never the same degree of intimacy between the two monarchs. (57)

After the untimely death of his son, Rudolph at Mayerling in 1888 (suicide or murder?), the next in line to the throne became the Emperor's nephew, Franz Ferdinand, whose equally untimely death at Sarajevo in June 1914, was to be the catalyst for the First World War. As far as the British government and public alike, the Heir-Apparent was somewhat of 'a man of mystery' and according to Sir Fairfax Cartwright, the ambassador in Vienna from 1908-13, "no two people could agree about him." (58) Combining in his person a curious mélange of reactionary and progressive sentiments, Franz Ferdinand had an abiding antipathy to the Magyar aristocracy, which was fully reciprocated on their part, so much so that few tears were shed on his demise in the parliament at Budapest, dominated as it was by the nobility on a highly restricted suffrage. Convinced that the Magyars' treatment of their subject nationalities, principally Roumanians and Slovaks, but also Croats and Serbs, was leading the Empire to disaster, Franz Ferdinand was hoping to remodel the Empire on some sort of Federal principle, having been impressed by the example of the United States (which he had visited) and the work of the Austrian Roumanian Federalist, Auriel Popovici-'The United States of Greater Austria.' (59) Although a good friend of the Kaiser, Franz Ferdinand had a residual degree of rancour for Prussia which had expelled Austria from the German confederation in 1866 and "cut off the branch on which the Habsburgs had been sitting for centuries as the leading German state" as well as "cutting short the development of the Federal principle which could have

proved a lasting and effective solution to the national problems of all Central Europe", as he put it.(60)

Progressive reforms, however, such as the introduction of universal suffrage in Hungary, were to be achieved by essentially reactionary means- by Diktat- utilizing the full force of the army, police and bureaucracy, even if it were to come to civil war- an eventuality for which he was prepared. However, in his defence it could be cogently argued that, given the intransigence of the Magyar nobility, there really was no other way of doing so.(61)

As far as Britain was concerned the Archduke's opinions were somewhat inconsequential- personal rather than political- although he had been gratified to learn that the great British conservative historian, Lord Acton, had regarded Britain and Austria as "being amongst the most of states because of the multitude of different peoples inhabiting them."(62) In contrast to his uncle, Franz Joseph, Franz Ferdinand never spoke warmly of Britain per se, in spite of being "immensely pleased" by his cordial reception at Edward VII's coronation in 1901.(63) During the Bosnian crisis, the Archduke became the chief spokesman for the anti-British lobby, denouncing both Edward VII and the Austro-Hungarian ambassador, Count Mensdorff (who was actually related to the King) for his "pusillanimous behaviour" (64) in his paper, the Reichspost. Given the morganatic nature of his marriage to the Countess of Hohenberg, Sophie, Franz Ferdinand was not allowed to bring his wife to Edward's funeral, and since he was only too understandably sensitive to any slight to his wife, which he had suffered in full measure from the Habsburg family itself, his dislike of England was intensified. However, with the accession of George V, the atmosphere changed for the better, and Franz Ferdinand, together with his wife, were to be warmly received by both the King and his wife, Mary, on private visits to England in 1913.

Between Franz Ferdinand and the British Foreign Office, however, there was to be no change in atmosphere, each regarding the other with mutual suspicion.(65) Although Edward VII had personally championed the cause of the Archduke's wife and Cartwright in Vienna had urged the British government to cultivate the wife of the future Emperor, this the government, signally, failed to do.

Intriguingly, the Archduke's well-known dislike of the Magyar élite caused the British Foreign Office considerable anxiety, believing that 'it boded ill for the future of the Dual Monarchy.'(66) Sir Charles Haringe, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, went so far as to say that "there would be fireworks when he comes to the throne."(67) Politically, at the international level, Franz Ferdinand's ideal was the revival of the Dreikaiserbund-"Russia-ourselves-Germany"-he declared to a Russian visitor in 1907:"What a power! The whole world would be at our feet!"(68) Significantly, he hoped, notwithstanding his reservations about England, in agreement with her.(69) Wrongly viewed by certain elements that the Archduke was 'the leader of the Wat-Party'-in reality he was continually opposing the belligerent demands of Conrad von Hötzendorff for preventive wars against Italy and Serbia, declaring vis-à-vis the latter:"Hands off Serbia! For God's sake do not touch a single inch of Serbian soil, not even a single plum tree!"(70) It was, thus, ironic that the shot that killed the Heir-Apparent in June 1914 killed the very man who believed in peace at all costs. Franz Ferdinand's death removed from the scene the one most important person in the corridors of power who could have fortified the resolve of both his uncle, Franz Joseph and the Hungarian Premier, Count Tisza, to find another way of confronting Serbia other than by vi et armis.

Turning to Great Britain, one may say that the influence of the British monarch, Edward VII, was, dramatically, misunderstood in both Germany and Austria-Hungary. As Sir Edward Grey trenchantly remarked:

A Legend arose in his lifetime that British foreign policy was due to his initiative, instigation and control. That was not so in my experience. He not only accepted the constitutional practice that policy must be that of his ministers, but he preferred it should be so.

The German Kaiser, for one, was not convinced, believing that "the encirclement(Einkreisung) of Germany..slowly and cleverly set going, certainly by Edward VII IS stronger after his death than am I who am still alive."(71)

Initially, the Austrian press had welcomed Edward's accession to the throne and the Neue Freie Presse had even lauded

him as "a friend of peace, of The Triple Alliance and Austria-Hungary"(72), but by 1906 this comment had become far more critical and, although Count Mensdorff tried to disabuse his government of the notion that the King was some kind of 'plotting diplomat', "Edward's entente policy" was soon subject to even more caustic observation.(73) Far from being a covert war-monger as the Kaiser believed, Edward was essentially a partisan of peace as the Neue Freie Presse had originally intimated; however, he was anxious that if a European war should break out then Britain should not find herself in her previous position of 'splendid isolation'- which to the King's mind was not 'splendid' at all. Thus, in his view, the importance of good relations with both France and Russia.

Edward was to be succeeded by his son George V in 1910; an intellectually gifted man, he, nevertheless, lacked in the words of Count Mensdorff "his father's insouciance and tact: a thorough Englishman, with all the good qualities and insular limitations of the typical John Bull."(74) Mensdorff found talking with the King less congenial than with his father but made a point of reinforcing George in his unease at the 'seemingly socialistic tendencies' of his Liberal government- especially in the conflict with the House of Lords in 1910-11. Fearful that Britain's entente with France might very well develop into a more formal alliance, Mensdorff sought to play upon the King's inherent monarchical and conservative instincts by suggesting to him that his and his country's interests would be better served by a closer relationship with the Central Powers. George's predilection for them was, in fact, graphically demonstrated in 1912 when George tried to insist on visiting Austria-Hungary and the other two empires before going to Republican France. The King had to ultimately give way at government insistence but not before the British ambassador to France, Sir Francis Bertie had suffered "plusieurs mauvais quarts d'heure" at the palace when the King had strongly warned him that "there must be no question of an alliance with France."(75) In spite of the polite rather than cordial relations that existed between George V and Count

Mensdorff, the King made a point of telling him that "of all foreigners, Austrians were the ones most welcome in England"(76)- an obvious allusion to the long-standing friendship between the two countries. Unlike his father George V did not harbour any lasting resentment to the Austrian Foreign Minister, Aehrenthal, over the Bosnian affair, and although he "liked the Archduke a lot" readily admitted that the former "was the wiser head" and "his conciliatory attitude to Italy" the mark of a great statesman (77) Given that the British court and the British government were often at odds over foreign policy it must have come as a great shock to Prince Henry of Prussia in 1912 when George told him that, constitutionally, the will of the Foreign Office must prevail and, therefore, Germany must have no illusions where Britain would stand in any conflict with France and Russia, whatever his personal feelings might be.(78)

Moving on to the principal statesmen in this period, Lord Salisbury on the British side occupied a particularly important place, being Foreign Secretary on no less than four occasions- 1878-80, 1885-6, 1887-92, and 1895-1900- and Prime Minister on three, holding both offices, simultaneously, on the last three occasions. Thus his command of foreign affairs was effectively more absolute than any of his predecessors or for that matter his successors too- with the notable exception of Sir Edward Grey. Salisbury, as previously indicated was the man who scuppered Russia's plans for a large Bulgarian state at San Stefano in 1878. It was also Salisbury, however, who went on to forge a close relationship with Austria-Hungary and the other members of The Triple Alliance, particularly Italy, through the so-called 'Mediterranean Agreements' in 1887. The *raison d'être* of the agreements was declared to be "the maintenance of the Balance of Power in the Mediterranean"- which was an euphemistic phrase, if ever there were one, for keeping Russia out of the Straits and Constantinople and a continuation of the policy pursued at Berlin.

While Salisbury had serious doubts about the long-term viability of the Dual Monarchy with its seeming intractable nationality problems, once declaring too, that "her vocation in Europe was gone,"(79) nevertheless, he sought an agreement with her and her allies all the while Russia seemed to present a

plausible threat not only to the Ottoman capital but also to British interests in Central Asia- notably India. Salisbury also saw such an agreement as a useful counter against France too, since the clash of British and French interests in Africa almost led to war at Fashoda in 1898.

As Prime Minister (1894-5) and Liberal leader, Lord Rosebery was also twice Foreign Secretary between 1885-6 and 1892-4. As a statesman Rosebery was widely regarded as being strong in promise but poor in actual performance- *capax imperii nisi imperasset*. Like his predecessor, Salisbury, whom he greatly admired, Rosebery adopted a similar sympathetic attitude vis-à-vis the Habsburg Empire and the other Triple Alliance members since he believed that relations with France were "really more troublesome than any other power." (80) as a result of colonial rivalry. Rosebery was, in fact, never to waiver in his belief that "the Monarchy was the natural ally" of Great Britain (81) and he hoped through her auspices to mitigate the growing estrangement with Germany, her most important Triple Alliance ally. As the years passed Rosebery lived to see his hopes dashed, declaring after the Bosnian crisis, "this calm before the storm is terrifying." (82) In toto Rosebery was considered by many of his contemporaries as the last of the old Whig breed of British diplomats and saluted in Roman fashion as "one about to die." (The classical allusion being the cry of the gladiator in the Circus Maximus- *moriturus-te salutant*.)

Rosebery was to be succeeded by Lord Lansdowne as Foreign Secretary. (1900-1905) A Whig by family tradition, circumstances made him a Tory. A direct descendant of the extraordinary French Foreign Minister, Talleyrand, who managed to serve both Napoleon and Louis XVIII (and thus possessing an instinctive predilection for France) Lansdowne, initially, at any rate tried to forge a closer alliance with Germany and the Habsburg Monarchy, which together with Italy was actively courting Britain at this time. So much so that Germany had actually gone so far as to offer Britain a role in the building of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway but just as popular indignation in Germany at Britain's 'bullying' of the Boers had torpedoed Chancellor Bismarck's attempted rapprochement in 1899, so resentment at the Kaiser's support for the Boers- the Kruger Telegram- made it politically impossible for Lansdowne to accept it. By the end of 1903 Lansdowne had moved from initial sympathy and interest in the project to a

position of outright opposition, obliquely warning Germany that any attempt at "the establishment of a naval base or a fortified port in the Persian Gulf would be resisted with all the means at our disposal." (82) Austria-Hungary could only look on, tertius despondens, as Britain now began to warm more closely to France, which was more in tune with Lansdowne's natural instincts- as it was of the new King Edward VII.

Lansdowne's tenure at the Foreign Office was superceded in turn by that of Sir Edward Grey, later known as Grey of Fallodon. Initially, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador was very impressed, reporting to his chief in Vienna, Aehrenthal, that Grey was "one of the most sincere and upright people" he knew (83), but after the Bosnian affair in 1908-9 he cooled markedly. Interestingly, it was Grey's intervention in domestic policy with his attack on the hereditary principle at Leith and his advocacy of a more equitable distribution of land that stunned both George V and Mensdorff alike and both men united a year later in 1910 in denouncing "Grey's dangerous radicalism" in internal affairs and "seeking to gain momentary advantages in foreign affairs." (84) Mensdorff was, in fact, to go on to question his competence in foreign affairs at all, since he never travelled, spoke only a basic French and proved only too willing "to sacrifice traditional friendships for the beaux yeux de M. Izvolsky" during the Bosnian crisis. (85) Although Grey was to maintain in an interview with C.P. Scott, the editor of the Manchester Guardian in 1911 that "a friendly understanding with France and Russia did not imply hostility to Germany", Scott was not convinced, saying that Grey's policy "was merely a revival of the old Palmerstonian doctrine of the 'Balance of Power' and rotten to the core." (86) "Aye, but here's the rub!", as Hamlet says -i.e the moot point. Was Grey's policy really geared to the preservation of the 'Balance of Power', as traditionally understood? Since 1900, in fact, the most critical threat to the European balance of power was not so much the growing strength of Russia or Germany- however significant that might have been- but the seemingly inexorable decline of Austria- Aehrenthal's success over Bosnia in 1908 notwithstanding. (The last impressive flare-up of a dying

star-like a Red Giant?) Indeed, Grey himself explicitly acknowledged this, utilizing this stellar metaphor when he said in 1913: "Austria will be of little use to us as a friend, if she falls apart. One cannot steer by a star that may dissolve." (87) But having recognized Austria's weakness, Grey did nothing effective to help her, the old historic ties of friendship notwithstanding. After all, *il va sans le dire*, that a true 'balance of power' policy requires the maintenance of all the essential elements in it; allowing one vital component to fall by the wayside effectively negates the whole concept. In 1901 André Chéradame had already noted that "l'Autriche-c'est le nouveau enfermé d'Europe" and Albert Sorel had similarly commented: "Voilà un siècle que l'on travaille à résoudre la question d'Orient (la Turquie). Le jour où l'on croira l'avoir résolu, l'Europe verra se poser inévitablement la question d'Autriche." (88) Yet Grey's policy entirely ignored this immediate and obvious danger-which actually served to increase the threat from Germany at the same time. On the eve of war in 1914, both Grey and the Foreign Office in general, were acutely aware of the real fears in both Vienna and Berlin that the Monarchy could very well go under- Franz Joseph and Conrad von Hötendorff had explicitly said as much: "If we must go under.." (*untergehen*)- yet rather than recognize this fact as the supreme danger per se, Grey was more concerned with what was to actually happen: that Germany, *faute de mieux*, would be forced to launch a preventive war to counter Russia's growing strength and her ally Austria's increasing weakness. À propos this scenario, the German Chancellor, Bethmann Hollweg declared: "We are fettered to a corpse!" In spite of everything, Grey never gave serious consideration as to how best to arrest Austria's decline by helping her preserve her integrity and independence; even her ally Germany sought to maintain by converting her into a subordinate power of the German Empire- a kind of grandiose Bavaria, as Prince Lichnowsky later admitted. One might argue that Britain's responsibility in all this was a particularly heavy one since she was not formally engaged to either of the rival alliance systems and therefore, uniquely, Grey could, had he so wished, play the role of a quasi 'honest broker.'

Quite extraordinarily, Grey took little or no notice of

Sir Fairfax Cartwright, the British ambassador in Vienna(1908-13) when he asserted that, were the effort made, Austria-Hungary could very well be weaned away from her membership of the Triple Alliance.(89) Instead Grey's concern to do nothing that might imperil the recent entente with Russia(1907) led him too readily to ascribe the failure of the Macedonian reforms to Austrian 'deviousness' alone while refraining from criticizing Russia, the other Mürzsteg power. In thus doing Grey was to seriously heighten Austrian suspicions of the ultimate aims of British policy after 1907. While Grey often liked to talk about the importance of acting through the Concert of Europe for upholding the peace in the NEAR EAST, condemning Aehrenthal for disturbing it with the Sandjak Railway project, yet his own *modus operandi* vis-a-vis Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, laid him open to the same charge that he levelled against Aehrenthal- i.e. utilizing the Concert as "a diplomatic manoeuvring ground"(90)- a case of the pot calling the kettle black.

Although it has often been said that Grey was unduly influenced, if not actually controlled by his permanent under-secretaries, it was rather the case that he was at one with them as a kindred mind and spirit. The prime example in this respect was Sir Charles Hardinge.(1906-10) Initially, Count Mensdorff gravely under-estimated him, characterizing Hardinge as "something of a light-weight"(ohne Substanz), while being, simultaneously, "very clever and pushing"(sehr gewandter Streber)(91). However, Mensdorff soon realized his grand faux pas, seeing that Hardinge was, in fact, a formidable protagonist, second only to the Secretary of State, Sir Edward Grey himself. The fact that Hardinge enjoyed the particular favour of the King, accompanying him on trips abroad, such as to the summer residence of Franz Joseph at Ischl in 1908, made him doubly formidable. Edward VII's confidence in Hardine was such that the King left him in complete charge of the detailed conversations. Politically, Hardinge was a kindred spirit of the Austrian Foreign Minister, Aehrenthal, sharing his ultra-conservative views- openly scornful of democracy

democracy and highly critical of "a free press- a terrible fleau"- he called it.(92) Although Hardinge was later to praise Aehrenthal for his sagacity in countering the war-party in Vienna, he never really forgave him "for his duplicity" over Bosnia in 1908. Having said that, however, Hardinge did agree with Aehrenthal that the preservation of Ottoman power in the Balkans was a sine qua non for the maintenance of peace and stability and in common with the Austrian Minister he was equally disparaging of both Serbia and Bulgaria, whose aspiration he regarded as dangerous as they were destabilizing for Europe as a whole.

Hardinge's successor as Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Arthur Nicolson(1910-16) had a completely different viewpoint, regarding Ottoman Muslim rule over Balkan Christians "as almost an abomination"(93)- which, as he confided to Count Berchtold in St. Petersburg when they were both ambassadors there, he "would dearly like to see terminated."(94) The seizure of power by the Young Turks at Constantinople seized him with dread and he exclaimed: "We are raising up Frankenstein!"(95) Nicolson was irredeemably anti-German and his continual attacks on Germany's alleged expansionist plans severely embarrassed the Ballhausplatz in Vienna."As long as he was Head of the Foreign Office", he declared, "Britain never, never should be friends with Germany." (96) Yet, that being said, Nicolson was by no means an enemy of the Monarchy per se but merely critical of her alliance with his ^Abête noire, Germany. In fact, after the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and his wife in JUNE 1914, Nicolson considered Austria's demands on Serbia were perfectly legitimate given the circumstances; he merely took issue with the fact that the Habsburg government was less than frank in its intentions and decidedly unreasonable in only giving Serbia 48 hours either to accept or reject them.

Ever since Nicolson's successful negotiations with Russia over Persia and Central Asia in 1907 Vienna had come to regard him as incurably pro-Russian, and the resulting furore in the Russian press over the Bosnian annexation in 1908 was firmly ascribed to Nicolson's intrigues. Aehrenthal, curiously, was remarkably charitable, merely giving vent to the hope that once

Hardinge "had settled in at the Foreign Office" he would "moderate his Germanophobia, coming to appreciate more fully the multiplicity of British interests" and to be "less local in his attachments." (97) Mensdorff, for his part, did not care for Nicolson at all, preferring to deal with Grey's private secretary, Sir George Tyrell (1907-15), especially when it came to such delicate matters as the recall of the British ambassador, Sir Fairfax Cartwright in 1913. Surprisingly enough, given his reputation for 'being difficult', Nicolson had greater rapport with Aehrenthal, whose efforts to preserve the peace at the height of the Bosnian crisis he fully appreciated. Indeed, there were to be no major disputes between the Monarchy and Great Britain in the years 1910-12. With Grey himself, though, relations were less than cordial and often strained. Nicolson was highly critical of Grey's Arbitration Treaty with the United States in 1911 and had no hesitation in telling foreign ambassadors so. Although Nicolson's views were not unconditionally pro-Russian as the Habsburg government generally thought (he refused to accept, for example, the argument of the Acting Russian Foreign Minister, Neratov, that the Treaty of Paris (1856), limiting Russian naval activity in the Black Sea and the Straits was "a dead letter"), nevertheless, he refused to make common cause with Aehrenthal over the issue. Nicolson's highly caustic view of the Young Turks and his undoubted pro-Russian stance (too overt for Grey's liking) made him, increasingly, persona non grata in the Foreign Secretary's eyes and he tended to side-line Nicolson all together by 1914. (98)

Sir Edward Goschen was to be the British ambassador in Vienna in the critical years leading up to the Bosnian Crisis (1905-8), having previously served in St. Petersburg. Goschen was a convivial figure, being both bon vivant and bon raconteur in equal measure, which made him 'a great hit' in Viennese society. Aehrenthal, however, disliked him, considering him "boring and even stupid", while Goschen for his part regarded the Austrian Minister with deep suspicion- as a kind of latter-day Machiavelli- completely "untrustworthy." (99) Goschen, like Hardinge, Bertie and Nicolson, belonged to the rising school of Germanophobes (100), convinced that Aehrenthal was but a pliable

tool in the hands of the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin. It could be argued that Goschen did lasting damage to Anglo-Austrian relations since his reports adversely influenced both Grey and the King Edward VII. His close association with the critical Vienna based journalist Henry Wickham Steed only tended to reinforce his general anti-German prejudices as well as his suspicion of the ultimate end of Austrian policy.

In December 1908 Sir Edward came to be replaced by Sir Fairfax Cartwright. Cartwright was a character of some interest since both his mother and grandmother were German and he had been a childhood companion and playmate of no less a personage than the German Kaiser Wilhelm II himself. Cartwright, however, could scarcely be accused of divided loyalties since he was even more suspicious of Germany than Goschen- a question of 'over-compensation' perhaps? (Like Ulstermen-more British than the British.) In fact his dislike of Germany was so great that the Berlin government refused to accept him- hence the Vienna embassy was kind of 'faute de mieux.' Initially, Cartwright shared the same opinion of Aehrenthal as Goschen but he soon realized that the Austrian Minister was serious in demonstrating the Monarchy's independence from Berlin and that the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina had in fact been carried out in spite of Germany rather than at her instigation. Cartwright did indeed play a very positive role in Anglo-Austrian relations, gaining Aehrenthal's confidence and even acting beyond his brief (*ultra vires*) by helping him draft the two texts dealing with the conflict with Serbia over the annexation.(101)

Later, however, Cartwright's increasingly vociferous criticism of Germany and the resulting 'furor teutonicus' from Berlin, really gave Aehrenthal little choice but to ask for his recall. Although the latter's death in February 1912 gave Cartwright a brief respite, Aehrenthal's successor, Count Berchtold repeated the demand and Cartwright finally left the following year. Cartwright's relations with Aehrenthal oscillated wildly but there was respect on both sides- even if it were at times somewhat grudging.

Sir Eyre Crowe was very much the archetypal 'Eminence grise', whose wide-ranging influence behind the scenes was only to come

to light much later after the Second World War. As Senior Clerk in the Foreign Office and Assistant Under-Secretary of State from 1912 Onwards, Crowe was the third member of the 'triumvirate' (together with Grey and Nicolson) who largely determined the course of British foreign policy vis-à-vis Austria and Germany alike up to 1914. Like Cartwright Crowe had many connections with Germany. Born in Leipzig, Saxony, both his mother and wife were German and his father later became commercial attache in Berlin. A friend of Prince Albert's brother, Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg, he was also on close terms with the German Crown Prince Frederick and his wife, Victoria, Queen Victoria's daughter. Like Cartwright too, Crowe was highly suspicious of Germany's ambitions and in a particularly forceful memorandum in 1907 argued that two points of view were feasible: either Germany was consciously seeking European hegemony as a prelude to world domination or else "the great German design is in reality no more than the expression of a vague, confused and unpractical statesmanship not realizing its drift." (102) It was quite clear, however, that Crowe thought the first scenario more likely. Knowing Germany well Crowe was a great admirer of both German art and science but aware too of what Friedrich Nietzsche called "the dark corridors of the German soul- a labyrinth in which one never quite knows what one may meet round the next corner." (The Twilight of the Idols.) Crowe did not believe Bismarck when he said that he had no desire for Germany to dominate Europe and the more he said it, the more Crowe viewed the 'Iron Chancellor' as some latter day Lady Macbeth "protesting too much." Unlike Sir Edward Goschen who was inclined to think that Germany's behaviour was motivated more by "clumsiness" rather than malevolence, since she was really 'the new boy on the block'- only having achieved national unity in 1871- her behaviour at Algeciras in 1906 convinced him of Goschen's error. In Crowe's view any attempt to conciliate the new empire by concessions would merely be interpreted as weakness and whet Germany's appetite for more- whether this were in Morocco or the Congo. Widely regarded as the Cassandra of the Foreign Office' (the prophet of doom fated to be right but never believed) few actually shared his alarmist views- with the

notable exception of Grey's private secretary, Sir William Tyrell. Thus, the latter wrote in 1911:

It is distressing to find that after six years of experience of Germany the inclination here is to believe that she can be placated by small concessions...what she wants is the hegemony of Europe.(103)

Basically too, Sir Arthur Nicolson was of a similar view, and Grey himself was later to admit that Crowe's prognosis was remarkably accurate: "Germany had taken advantage of Austria's local quarrel with Serbia to unleash her wider ambitions. Just like Grey, however, Crowe never considered how Britain could help Austria free herself from the cloying embrace of Germany which she was forced to accept, *faute de mieux*, given the steady "encirclement of the Monarchy." (104), in Czernin's words, by Russia, France and the Balkan states. Once again it was a question of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Austria's only too evident decline really did impel Germany to a pre-emptive strike before it was too late- or as the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Gottlieb von Jagow put it:

Whether we get our money's worth from that increasingly disintegration of states on the Danube is open to question. However, the maintenance of Austria and indeed of the most powerful Austria possible is a necessity for us, for both internal and external reasons..That she cannot be maintained for ever, I willingly admit..(105)

It is curious, but like Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca, who never actually appears en scene- indeed she is dead- yet her 'presence' or rather absence- overshadows the whole proceedings. The fate of Austria similarly acts as a kind of back-drop for a wider stage production- mentioned obliquely rather than directly, almost *en passant* as it were, as a kind of aside by Grey and the other members of the Foreign Office. What was to become a wider war, not only on the European stage but the world one as well, with the conflict between Germany and England has tended to obscure this elemental point- the war as, intrinsically, one of the Austrian Succession, as previously indicated.

Moving on to the Austrian dimension of this brief résumé of leading statesmen in this period, Gústáv, Count Kálnoky von Kőröspatak, was Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, between 1881 and 1885. Kálnoky had originally been based in London in the years 1860-70 where what he regarded as the vacillating behaviour

of both Lord Palmerston and Lord Derby convinced him that parliamentary control over foreign policy was eminently undesirable. A staunch Monarchist Kálmoky considered it axiomatic that any attack on the principle of Monarchy "was an indirect attack on the Habsburg dynasty." Therefore it was a "vital necessity" for Austria-Hungary, for example, to support the Iberian monarchies of Spain and Portugal when they seemed to be under threat.(106) It was in line with this reasoning that when, in 1835, Milan IV of Serbia made the somewhat extraordinary proposal of exchanging his entire state for "a good pension", Kálmoky declined the offer, saying: "a flourishing and independent Serbia on friendship terms with us suits us better than an unruly province."(107) Not that Kálmoky underestimated Serbia's importance- far from it. For, as he remarked to Count Taaffe, in September of the same year: "Serbia is the key to the Monarchy's position in the Near East."(108) And in a strikingly perceptive comment, he added: "We need to tread softly vis-à-vis Serbia since otherwise, the South Slav ideal will find a practical basis for its agitation" with "a potentially dangerous affect on our own Slav population" converting the state into "a potential South Slav Piedmont."(109)

Building upon the conservative policy of his predecessor, Count Andrásy, Kálmoky renewed the Dual Alliance concluded with Bismarck in 1879, and then working in conjunction with the German Chancellor secured Italy's accession to what then became the Triple Alliance in 1881 and Roumania's association in 1883. It was certainly ironic- and indeed paradoxical- that Kálmoky who laid so much stress on conservative, monarchical solidarity with Russia should, nevertheless expend considerable time and energy in forging two imposing blocks against her- for that, in effect, was the result of the Triple Alliance with Germany and Italy, and the Mediterranean Agreements with Britain. The explanation for this prima facie striking volte face is to be found in Kálmoky's deep suspicions of Russia's designs on Constantinople, particularly after her intrigues in Bulgaria in 1835-86.

In 1885, Kálmoky had the misfortune to become embroiled in

a violent quarrel between the Hungarian parliament and the papal nuncio, Aglardi, who had criticized the government's civil marriage bill. After a particularly virulent attack on him by the Hungarian Prime Minister Banffy, Kálmoky felt he could take no more and duly resigned. In a subsequent letter to Aehrenthal he complained bitterly that "the Austrian half of the Empire seems incapable of keeping the Hungarian parliament in order" and "the gang needs to be watched." (110) Although Kálmoky later claimed that he was "glad to be au-dessous de la mêlée" since "there is such a fin de siècle about politics and I can hardly bear to watch" (111), his effective relegation to the status of 'persona non grata' by the court distressed him greatly. As angry as she was upset Kálmoky's sister wrote to Aehrenthal, asking him to put on record "the shameful way my brother was treated after his retirement" and that "the thanks of the House of Austria should go down as a fearful warning to future generations." (112)

As Kálmoky's successor, Franz Joseph chose a wealthy Polish aristocrat called Count Agenor Goluchowski, who had, in fact been the author of the abortive, conservative-federalist constitution of 1860. Like Kálmoky Goluchowski was a staunch conservative, holding sway as Foreign Minister for some 11 years- from 1895 to 1906. Acutely aware of the Monarchy's grave internal problems stemming from the conflicting claims of her many nationalities reinforced by the increasingly strident demands of the Magyars for more and more autonomy, the leitmotif of Goluchowski's *modus operandi* became one of 'quieta non movere'- or 'Let sleeping dogs lie.' Goluchowski was to attempt to breathe new life into the Mediterranean Agreements but ultimately failed, largely due to his insistence that Britain give a categorical assurance that she would safeguard Constantinople from any attack by Russia. This 'va banque' approach on Goluchowski's part was, undoubtedly, a serious miscalculation since the two empires could still have co-operated together and a more definitive agreement might very well have been reached later. Thus, the Agreements were allowed to lapse in 1896. It was during Goluchowski's tenure of the Foreign Office that the jibe 'Dual Anarchy on short notice' became common currency.

Interestingly, though, in spite of his grave misgivings

about Russia, reinforced by his Polish ancestry, Goluchowski was able to arrive at a modus vivendi with her- an entente which was to last from 1895-1908. This was achieved by basically 'putting on ice' such controversial questions as the ultimate fate of the occupied provinces of Bosnia-Herzegovina. There can be little doubt that Goluchowski would have much preferred an alliance with Britain but as this proved not possible since that country's commitment to the status quo at the Straits now seemed doubtful, the entente with Russia was rather in the nature of *faute de mieux*, for as Goluchowski roundly declared "in political action one must base one's position on certainties" not on "fairly nebulous agreements such as those of 1887.2(113) Yet Goluchowski's fears about British policy were somewhat exaggerated; Salisbury was certainly not contemplating abandoning the Ottoman Empire let alone partitioning it with Russia, as Berlin had suggested to him. The case was rather that after the Armenian massacres in 1896 it was nigh on politically impossible for even the most ardent Turcophile to declare that support for the Sultan and hostility to Russia could be guaranteed whatever the circumstances. In fact as late as February 1896 Salisbury had said to the cabinet that he was still "strongly opposed to any policy that would cut Austria adrift for that would reconstitute the Dreikaiserbund which must be injurious to Great Britain."(114)

Goluchowski's fate was to mirror that of Kálmoky. Constantly attacked by the Magyar half of the Delegations (the joint body representing both the Vienna and the Budapest parliaments) and Hungarian parliament's refusal to restrain them, Goluchowski like Kálmoky before him resigned in despair. Although Franz Joseph still declared his support for him Goluchowski refused to change his mind. An additional factor in Goluchowski's decision was his belief that the Emperor's support for universal suffrage in the Austrian half of the Monarchy as the panacea for her nationality problems was fundamentally misplaced; far from assuaging national passions he felt sure they would be aggravated by it.

Goluchowski's successor was Alois, Baron, later Count Lexa von Aehrenthal, who after Metternich and Schwarzenberg, was beyond doubt the most impressive Foreign Minister that the Habsburg Empire possessed in the final years of its existence.

Aehrenthal was in a similar mold to his predecessors- a staunch conservative and monarchist and a highly skillful diplomat. A past master of the art of *léger de main* in negotiations, he was a virtuoso, in Goluchowski's words "of concealing facts whose existence could not be denied"(115), while Count Berchtold was to comment "he possessed the frightful characteristic of overlooking facts(*Informationen*) that do not fit into his complicated House of Cards."(116)

Given his pronounced conservative views it was hardly surprising that Aehrenthal should want an amiable *modus vivendi* with Russia, the conservative power par excellence, which would be a useful counterpoise to Germany, Austria's chief ally notwithstanding.. Naturally, Aehrenthal was pleased to secure German support for his Balkan policy- but only on his own terms. Hence, it was a constant source of irritation to him that London persistently reacted as if he were merely a pliant tool of the Wilhelmstrasse, when he was trying to demonstrate that, in spite of her many domestic problems, Austria-Hungary was still one of the Great Powers and quite capable of formulating and carrying out her own independent policy. Aehrenthal was convinced that the Empire had a great future before it and not just an illustrious past, as her sceptics maintained. While Aehrenthal was ultimately to resolve the Bosnia-Herzegovina question in the Empire's favour, effectively dragging Germany in Austria-Hungary's wake, in doing so he seriously weakened the stability of the Young Turk government in Constantinople- the very scenario that his German ally desperately wanted to avoid. Also, of course, this was, paradoxically, at variance with his own international agenda. Whatever the rights or wrongs of the constitutional issue involved, Aehrenthal had set a 'bad' example which the Balkan states might very well seek to emulate, covetous, as they were of large swathes of Ottoman territory. As a consequence, Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Greece were scarcely likely to be impressed by any appeals from Aehrenthal to refrain from attacking Turkey, since in their view, the Austrian Minister's position was decidedly hypocritical, equivalent to: "Don't do as I do- do as I say."

Ideally, Aehrenthal would have liked to have reconciled the Slavonic population of the Empire by adopting some kind of 'Trialist' system, but resistance to any such project was so fierce that he was reluctantly compelled to abandon the project. As Cartwright reported from Vienna, an Austrian Minister might succeed against Germans and Slavs but not against the Magyars--the support of the Emperor notwithstanding.(117) In common with the Heir-Apparent, in spite of their other differences, Aehrenthal bitterly resented the Magyar nobility's opposition to any attempt to conciliate the Slavs, whether within or without the Empire.(118)

What struck Cartwright most about Aehrenthal was his incorrigible 'authoritarianism', since he would not tolerate any of his subordinates expressing any political views to foreign heads during his absence from Vienna (119) PERHAPS the most sagacious criticism of Aehrenthal came from his fellow countryman Mensdorff who said that his Minister was "an eighteenth century Realpolitiker" thinking only in terms of 'Kabinettspolitik' and totally indifferent to--if not disdainful of--parliaments and public opinion alike. If British statesmen sometimes exaggerated their influence, Aehrenthal, in contrast, constantly under-rated them.(120)

While Aehrenthal was probably right to be sceptical of British claims that governments in Britain had to 'swim with the current of opinion rather than against it, his knowledge of British affairs was limited and, regrettably, he failed to accord to the excellent despatches that Mensdorff sent to him the merit they warranted. The Bosnian crisis of 1908 proved to be a kind of belated 'baptism of fire' for Aehrenthal. Although he came through it successfully, later earning Cartwright's praise that "he raised high the banner of the Habsburg Empire which he found almost ignored by the other European powers when he came into office"(121), in the long run it was to prove a Pyrrhic victory. Not only did the annexation unleash a wave of popular indignation throughout Serbia and Russia, irreparably damaging relations with those countries but also disconcerting Austria's German and Italian allies, who were only given a perfunctory warning.

Ironically, although the British Foreign Office and Grey came to accept that after 1908-9 Aehrenthal was sincere in his desire maintain the status quo they, nevertheless harboured lingering doubts. After all, as Marx had said a propos 'the white revolutionary Bismarck': "Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione quaerentes?" (Who would suffer the Gracchi brothers (Roman revolutionaries) to complain of sedition?) The 'Iron Chancellor' had gone on to unceremoniously dispossess the King of Hanover and the Duke of Nassau- inter alios- of their dominions after the Bruderkrieg with Austria in 1866. Similarly, it was all very well for Aehrenthal to now emphasize the importance of the status quo in the Balkans when he had done so much to upset it. Naturally, Aehrenthal could, legitimately, rejoin that the forbearance with which Britain reacted to French designs on Morocco and Italian designs on Tripoli, was in marked contrast to her declarations of outrage over the conversion of a 30 year old occupation into an annexation which, in fact, the British had already suggested in 1878. Aehrenthal's death from cancer in February 1912 was, nevertheless, genuinely mourned in London where even his old opponents magnanimously declared him to be "not only the doyen of the continental foreign ministers but the most important."(122)

Albert, Count Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, became the Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Britain in 1904, having first served as chargé d'affaires there (1903-4). Mensdorff had, in fact spent many years in Britain and, as a consequence, his knowledge of British culture, society and government, was in many respects unsurpassed. 'A particular feather in his cap' was to have won the Grand National on his own horse in 1883, which made Mensdorff not only a celebrity but a great favourite in British society. Mensdorff also enjoyed the additional advantage of close family ties with the British Royal Family, being particularly liked by George V- "his affectionate friend and cousin."(123) Until the Bosnian crisis broke Mensdorff was persona gratissima with Aehrenthal and the British Foreign Office alike, but then, much to his chagrin, he found himself in the somewhat invidious position of 'falling between two stools.' On the one hand he was unable to convince Aehrenthal that the latter's suspicions of British policy

were unjustified and, on the other hand, that the Austrian Minister was not merely acting at Berlin's behest. Sir Charles Hardinge fully appreciated Mensdorff's dilemma, saying: "I cannot help but sympathize with this poor, little man. He is not a fitting representative of a policy of duplicity such as Aehrenthal's." (124) Duplicitous or not, Mensdorff was truly mortified by the embarrassing position that Aehrenthal effectively put him in, as will be seen in Chapter V. Certainly, after 1908, Aehrenthal regarded Mensdorff with an increasingly cool eye as one being not completely trustworthy and too much under the influence of his British connections- if not exactly 'nobbled' by them- in modern parlance. Knowing that he no longer enjoyed his Minister's full confidence, Mensdorff lived in apprehension of imminent recall- so much so that Edward VII himself felt obliged to intervene personally on his behalf. A course of action which, of course, ran the risk of proving counter-productive, merely fuelling Aehrenthal's suspicion and distrust. As it happened, Aehrenthal allowed Mensdorff to stay at his post but took the precaution of despatching Count Tarnowski to London 'to keep a watchful eye on him' as his chargé d'affaires. As both men and diplomats Mensdorff and Tarnowski were like the proverbial 'chalk and cheese'. While Mensdorff's *modus operandi* was invariably one of 'fortiter in re et suaviter in modo' Tarnowski was one of 'fortiter in re et modo' driving even the normally placid Grey to distraction with his continual bickering over trivia.

Interestingly, Mensdorff was a great admirer of Lord Rosebery who had been a good friend of the Monarchy. In fact, Rosebery was one of the foremost admirers of Franz Joseph in England, and highly sympathetic to Aehrenthal's position in 1908. Indeed, he took grave exception to the barrage of criticism that had been levelled at Aehrenthal during the Bosnian crisis and Grey's only too willing dependence, in his view, on Russia and France. (125) Rosebery had looked on with increasing concern about the drift of British foreign policy since he had been in charge in the nineties, but he was powerless to do anything about it. Mensdorff's esteem for Rosebery was so great that he judged him to

be "the greatest living authority on foreign affairs in England", he seriously misjudged Rosebery's ability to influence policy any more. Although Rosebery was chosen by George V to travel to Vienna to announce his accession to the throne, this by no means implied any wish on the British government's part for any closer ties with the Monarchy. Rosebery was unable either to induce Lord Northcliffe and The Times to adopt a more moderate and friendly stance vis-à-vis the Empire, as the Bosnian crisis was to vividly illustrate.(126) From Austria's point of view it was particularly unfortunate that Mensdorff was unable to forge a closer relationship with the one British statesman who remained steadfastly pro-Monarchy- Lord Fitzmaurice, the brother of the former Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne. After the latter's promotion to the post of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Fitzmaurice was effectively "cut adrift from foreign affairs", as he explained to Mensdorff, at the very moment of the crisis in 1908, when he could have been of great assistance to the Austrian cause.(127) A year later, in 1909, Fitzmaurice became seriously ill, rendering him even more 'hors de combat.' On the eve of war in July 1914, Fitzmaurice was to make the pertinent observation that, Grey's remarks to the contrary notwithstanding, "he believed that 'the balance of power' was a doctrine abandoned by the Liberals." (128) However, since Grey had a high absolute control over foreign affairs, no other minister seriously or effectively challenged him as to whether 'the balance of power' was the leitmotif of his foreign policy or not. It is quite stunning to recall the fact that, according to Fitzmaurice, only Lord Ripon, the Liberal leader in the Lords (1905-8), had any interest let alone knowledge in foreign affairs- and that did not extend to the Near East. Quite extraordinarily too, Grey very rarely kept the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, au courant with foreign affairs. Apart from two conversations at the height of the Bosnian crisis in 1908, he only informed Asquith of the demand on Austria-Hungary's part for the recall of Cartwright in 1912.

As for Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty (1911-15), Mensdorff had known him since he was a child and quite liked him; yet again, quite extraordinarily- as far as is known-

Mensdorff and Churchill were never to discuss Austria-Hungary's naval plans, and it went without saying that the Admiralty as such never waivered in their belief that the Monarchy's Dreadnought building programme was instigated and continuously directed by Berlin.

In the crucial years before the First World War, Aehrenthal's successor at the Ballhausplatz was to be Leopold, Count Berchtold von Ungarschitz, Pratting und Pulitz (1912-15). A protégé of Aehrenthal's, Berchtold had been ambassador at St. Petersburg too, and his knowledge of Russian affairs was second only to his mentor, Aehrenthal himself. Berchtold suffered, however, from a distinct diplomatic weakness in that he knew comparatively little about Balkan affairs. As a result, one of his more informed subordinates, his Sektionschef, Count Forgach, came to have a greater influence over him than would have otherwise been the case. Notorious for his hesitancy and his 'vacillating nature' (true to Austrian tradition, one might add), the Heir Apparent, Franz Ferdinand, was consequently able to secure a degree of influence over foreign policy that he was never able to achieve with any other Foreign Minister. In general, Berchtold pursued a similar conservative policy to that of the previous minister- even more so. After the Bosnian affair Berchtold eschewed all thought of further territorial expansion for two basic reasons. The first was so as to not antagonize Russia even more than she had been already and second, in order not to increase "the already unwieldy Slav population of the Empire." (129) In his first major speech to the Delegations, Berchtold stressed the importance of the Triple Alliance for Austria-Hungary (his misgivings about Italy notwithstanding) and emphasized that "our policy is a policy of stability and peace framed to protect our legitimate interests...and pursuing no ideas of expansion." (130) However, to this he carefully added the caveat: "We are situated geographically in the midst of military states which ceaselessly increase their defensive strength." (131)

Ideally, Berchtold would have liked a rapprochement with Serbia along with the strict maintenance of the status quo in the Balkans which meant the preservation of European Turkey. If this were no longer possible then his 'plan B'- so to speak- was the creation of a greater Bulgaria- the very aim which both Austria-

Hungary and Britain had jointly opposed- at Serbia's expense. Under no circumstances was Berchtold prepared to tolerate Serbian access to the Adriatic- this was the ne plus ultra of his Balkan policy. Ironically, Berchtold was not only related to Franz Joseph along with the German Kaiser but the Tsar of Russia too, and since he was known to be "soaked in Russian ideas and sympathies", his nomination as Foreign Minister caused a great deal of consternation at the Wilhelmstrasse, his German connection notwithstanding. However, if the Russian government were hoping for a more accommodating stance on the part of Austria now that Aehrenthal had disappeared from the scene, they were to be sorely disabused by Berchtold's vehement opposition to any Serbian access to the sea.(132)

Berchtold has had the dubious honour of being 'uniquely damned' in some quarters with the ultimate responsibility for the descent into the maelstrom of the First World War. Perhaps the most scathing indictment was to come from Winston Churchill when he declared that "Berchtold is the epitome of this age when the affairs of Brobdingnag are managed by the Lilliputians."(133) The historian G.p. Gooch has, however, been more charitable, saying: "It was doubtful if any other Austrian statesman could have done better in the circumstances."(134)

Berchtold certainly had no desire to go to war with Serbia in July 1914 but the assassination of the Heir-Apparent and his wife reluctantly convinced him that the Rubicon had now been crossed and the die was cast.(alea est jacta.) All other options for the Monarchy had been closed off and all that remained was the proverbial ultima ratio regum- bellum (war). In spite of Serbia's promises of 'good behaviour' after Bosnia, the kingdom had never ceased to engage in hostile and provocative actions against the Monarchy. Anti-Austrian propaganda had continued to stream, uncurbed, out of Belgrade, and Serbia's attempts to sabotage the creation of an independent Albanian state were further proof, if any were needed, that her hostility was unrelenting. The assassination was in effect merely the dramatic dénouement, the ghastly culmination of a whole chain of incidents. In an age when crowned heads- or those who anticipated so being- were of enormous political significance and not just ceremonial

the Archduke Franz Ferdinand's assassination could only be regarded as a direct attack on the prestige of the Monarchy, which, in the Kaiser's words "could not go unanswered."

Armed with what was to become Germany's notorious 'blank cheque', Berchtold summoned the Joint Ministerial Council on July 7th, where, with the exception of, initially Tisza, all the members agreed to make:

Such far-reaching demands of Serbia as justified the presumption of their rejection in order to open the path for a radical solution through military intervention. (135)

On July 9th Berchtold secured Franz Joseph's tacit agreement to war-"it was impossible to go back now"(136) and on July 20th the Note which was tantamount to an ultimatum was despatched to Belgrade.

Quite remarkably, the Note was accepted almost in toto by the Serbian government, who only demurred on one key point- the demand that Austro-Hungarian officials be permitted to investigate the possible ramifications of the conspiracy on Serbian soil. (Even the Kaiser in Berlin thought that the matter could be resolved to Austria's satisfaction when he read the Serbian reply.)

However, the demurring on this one point was made the effective casus belli. Serbia's refusal to accept all the points unconditionally was declared to be intolerable and accordingly diplomatic relations were broken off and war declared on July 28th. Austria's harsh response to what was basically a conciliatory Serbian reply lost the Monarchy a great deal of sympathy which the assassination had originally engendered throughout Europe. In consequence, both Italy and Roumania hastened to declare that, in this instance, the casus foederis did not apply- and only Germany declared her readiness to stand steadfast behind her ally.

There can be little doubt that Berchtold had been deeply wounded by the constant vitriolic criticism levelled at him by 'the war-party' in Vienna, headed by Conrad von Hötzendorff, the Chief of the Austrian General Staff, particularly for his passive policy during the Balkan Wars in 1912-13. Much to Conrad von Hötzendorff's dismay, Berchtold had even refused to

consider reoccupying the strategically placed Sandjak of Novi Bazaar which would have, at least, the merit of preventing Serbia and Montenegro from forming a common frontier.(137) This, thus, made it easier for Berchtold to break in Professor Hantsch's words "with the inglorious, misinterpreted and, into the bargain, unsuccessful policy of yielding."(138) While Berchtold would have much preferred, not unnaturally, "to localize the war", Tisza, the Hungarian Minister-President had already warned him "that war with Serbia would in all probability bring about the intervention of Russia and therewith, world war."(139)

Berchtold was to remain Foreign Minister until 1915 when his failure to secure Italy's support for the war- which could only be achieved by the sacrifice of Austro-Hungarian territory- finally led to his resignation.

No general review of this period would be complete without some consideration of the career of the formidable Hungarian Minister-President, Count Tisza von Borosjenő und Szeged (1903-1905) and again (1913-1917). Tisza's impact on Austro-Hungarian policy- whether domestic or foreign- was indisputably enormous. An old friend of Tisza's- Count Stephen Burian- gave this assessment of his character:

Whether one agreed with him or not, any subject that one discussed with him gained in clarity and precision. He was definite in his views and expressed them forcibly. When he was right- and sometimes when he was wrong- he could be most convincing, carrying one away with his genuine personal convictions and the powerful logic of his own conclusions...Tisza's dialectics proved an admirable touchstone for the value of one's own opinions. In his will he was obstinate. When he had made up his mind on a thing, it was exceedingly difficult to move him..He was the best-loved and the best-hated man in Hungary."(140)

Franz Joseph was always greatly impressed by Tisza's honesty, integrity and hard-working nature, which reminded him so much of his father Koloman- himself Minister-President between 1875 and 1890. Unlike his Austrian counterparts, Tisza was a great champion of parliamentary government- albeit one resting on a highly restrictive franchise, since only 7% of the Hungarian population had the vote. As a consequence, more than just a superficial evaluation is required when examining such declarations by Tisza as:

Parliamentary government is the form assumed by national life in the modern world that in the fullest manner unites freedom and order, individual liberty and organized national force.(141)

Indeed, in a country where it was said that 'a Magyar noble would sooner regard his horse as a member of the Magyar nation than his peasant', a great number of political statements- and not just those of Tisza- have to be taken cum granu salis.

In dealing with Tisza, however, Franz Joseph always had 'an ace up his sleeve' in the form of the threat to decree universal suffrage, which the British historian and commentator, Robert Seton-Watson continually hoped the Emperor would do(142), as the *conditio sine qua non* of any meaningful reform in Hungary and the Empire at large.(Of this more in Chapter 111). At last the Emperor was never to play this card but the Heir-Apparent, Franz Ferdinand, seemed almost certain to do so. At a stroke not only would the Magyar peasantry be enfranchized for the very first time but the subject nationalities too. Thus the prospect of the Archduke's accession to the throne was regarded with trepidation by Tisza, and his assassination was greeted with no small measure of relief by the Minister-President and the rest of the Magyar nobility.

Whether one liked Tisza or not, he did have the faculty of inspiring respect amongst friend and foe alike. Thus Henry Wickham Steed, The Times correspondent in Vienna and one of Tisza's most trenchant critics, declared that he had "the quality of a statesman" even if he were "a cross between a gamekeeper in his Sunday best and a fanatical monk."(143) A staunch supporter of the 1867 Ausgleich with Austria, Tisza was irrevocably opposed to any restructuring of the Empire on either 'Trialist' or 'Federalist' lines as Franz Ferdinand evidently intended. By the same token, Tisza was a determined opponent of the Hungarian Independence Party, believing that only in close rapport with Austria and the German Empire could Hungary both control her fractious Slav and Roumanian population and still play the role of a Great Power in international affairs.

As the clouds on the European horizon darkened after 1908, Tisza, now the leader of the Party of National Work-Munka-

which had supplanted the Liberals, continually declared: "The Slavs are our danger, the Germans our shield and buckler." (144) As long ago as 1889, Tisza was convinced that a general European war was inevitable given the hostility between Germany and France, the growing nationalist ambitions of the Balkan Slav states supported by Russia, whether overtly or covertly *inter alios* and, thus, he was convinced that Franz Joseph was right in insisting upon the unity of the Austro-Hungarian army. Quite prophetically, one might add, Tisza had stated that "this war will be no child's play. It may very well determine the life or death of the Hungarian nation." (145)

For all his political sagacity, however, Tisza's vision remained curiously myopic. By refusing to countenance any real autonomy for Slavs and Roumanians alike, his vision of the future became, in effect, a self-fulfilling prophecy. In stead of seeking to accommodate the legitimate and natural aspirations of Hungary's nationalities, he merely antagonized them by declaring that "our non-Magyar fellow citizens must reconcile themselves to the fact that they belong to a national state which one nation has conquered and founded." (146)

As for the question of universal suffrage- Tisza never waivered in his outright opposition, knowing full well that it would entail the downfall of the Magyar noble class to which he had devoted his life.

While Tisza was certain that war would come, sooner or later, he, nevertheless this in common with Franz Ferdinand that absolutely nothing should be done to provoke it. In a Memorandum in March 1914 he coolly set down his fears:

A combination that would reconcile Bulgaria with the rest of the Christian Balkan states under Russian patronage, and, as a result of a successful war of conquest directed against the Monarchy would assure Macedonia to Bulgaria, which would complete the forging of the iron ring about us, for which Russia is so tenaciously working, and make actual the military preponderance of the Entente on the Continent. Thereby the long desired moment would arise when Russia and France could forment the world war with prospect of success." (147)

Apart from the failure of the Entente powers to suborn Bulgaria, since Serbia refused to surrender her hold over the bulk of Macedonia, this was to prove a fairly accurate prognosis of what was to actually happen. Most historians' attentions have been focused on the 'Einkreisung' of Germany, but more

greatest threat to peace- and she knew it. In his novel Radetskymarsch, Joseph Roth was but one of many to draw attention to the fact that "the vultures are beginning to circle over the heads of the Doppeladler."(148)

Tisza was particularly fearful of a kind of 'Catch 22' situation- in Joseph Heller's fortuitous phrase- a veritable political Scylla and Charybdis, in which the avoidance of one danger ran the very real risk of falling victim to the other. An unsuccessful war would almost certainly entail the destruction of the Monarchy and, ipso facto, the privileged position of Tisza's class within it, but a successful war could also have disastrous consequences too. The overthrow of Serbia might very well provoke irresistible demands for the annexation of Serbian territory, further disturbing the balance of power within the Empire to the advantage of the Slavs and to the detriment of Magyars and Germans alike. Indeed, it was only after Berchtold had personally assured him that no annexation of Serbian territory was contemplated- apart from minor border rectifications- that Tisza reluctantly gave his assent to war. Even then Conrad von Hötzendorff was heard to mutter: "Yes, before the Balkan Wars we heard a lot about 'no alteration of the status quo would be permitted'- but no one said anything about the status quo afterwards."(149)

It is ironic that Tisza- like the Heir-Apparent- should unjustifiably gain the reputation of being 'a war-monger', since he was, in fact, the only member of the Council of Ministers to oppose it for so long. It is perhaps even more curious that he should never try to defend himself against the accusation for which he was to be assassinated in 1919.

Once war broke out Tisza steadfastly supported Berchtold, particularly in the latter's refusal to buy Italy's neutrality, even though it would have been at the expense of Austrian rather than Hungarian territory.(South Tyrol, Trieste etc.) Later in 1917 Tisza also opposed the new Emperor Karl's proposals for a separate peace. Stubborn to a fault, even in extremis, he still continued to oppose any meaningful concessions to the kingdom's nationalities, even though it was blatantly obvious by then that the fate of not only Hungary but the Empire as a whole could very

well depend upon them.

All in all, one can say that Tisza was the very embodiment of principle but one of such a dogmatic and reactionary cast of mind that it cost him his life and helped doom the Monarchy too.

CHAPTER 1

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY THROUGH BRITISH EYES IN THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

The outbreak of war with Germany in August 1914 could scarcely have come as a surprise to the majority of the British population. Various reasons would have been adduced for this situation but all of them would undoubtedly have hinged on the central fact of the need to resist the aggressive ambitions of the most powerful military state located in the very heart of Europe. Some would have stressed the importance of defending the liberty and independence of small states like Belgium (the immediate *casus belli*) while others would have argued that it was absolutely imperative to destroy for ever the Prussian militaristic spirit which, not sated by the forcible unification of Germany in 1866-1871, was now threatening to engulf all Europe. Another argument would have been not only was the war necessary to save Europe but more importantly Britain and the British Empire that were directly menaced by Germany's *Weltpolitik*- a striking example of which was the perceived threat to India by the Berlin-Baghdad Railway. If Russia had been seen as the traditional threat par excellence to 'the most precious jewel in the Imperial Crown' vividly illustrated by the so-called 'Great Game' played out in the wilds of Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier, now Germany's conscious and premeditated '*Drang Nach Osten*' was viewed as the chief danger. However, there can be little doubt that the overwhelming majority of the British public would have been hard put to explain why Britain was now at war with Austria-Hungary. In the last analysis only one clear reason would have been forthcoming and that would be that the Habsburg Empire was Germany's principal ally. Although most people were aware that Austria-Hungary's attack on its small southern neighbour, Serbia, was the catalyst for the general European conflagration, this was not seen as being in the same category as Germany's invasion of Belgium- a neutral country, guaranteed by all the Great Powers, Germany included. After all, Austria-Hungary hardly constituted a threat to either Britain or the British Empire, let alone democracy, and the Monarchy had legitimate cause for complaint against Serbia with her incessant anti-Habsburg propaganda and activity. Besides even if there

were no evidence of direct Serbian government involvement in the assassination of the Austrian Heir-Apparent, Franz Ferdinand and his wife by a Bosnian Serb, nevertheless, there were grounds for suspicion of collusion on the part of military and intelligence officials in Belgrade. In fact, little was really known in Britain at this time of the vast, polyglot empire that constituted the Dual Monarchy: it was a veritable 'terra incognita.' As one Austrian visitor amusingly recalled he was often asked "the queerest of questions" but this was perhaps not surprising because:

"It must be confusing to meet Germans, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ruthenians, Italians, Servians, Croatians, Roumanians, and Jews all describing themselves as 'Austrians' not to speak of the several hundred thousand Bulgarians, Albanians, Turks, Armenians, Greeks and Gypsies who live in our midst." (1)

If this were a common reaction at the beginning of the 20th century it is scarcely surprising that ignorance of the Empire was even more profound in the 19th. The lands of the Danubian Monarchy, especially to the south and south-east of Vienna represented a kind of 'darkest Europe'- to borrow the somewhat patronizing phrase applied by Europeans to Central Africa. British travellers in Transylvania and Galicia recorded a similar sense of awe and wonder as adventurers in the Congo and Abyssinia. As late as the 1890's Grenville-Cole, for example, was astounded at the number of different peoples that he met on the so-called 'Gypsy Road' from Cracow in Austrian Poland to the Rhineland via Bohemia. The existence of the Czechs, in fact, came as complete surprise to him since he was under the impression that the inhabitants of Bohemia were, mainly, if only German. Both he and his travelling companion were, initially, taken for Germans and thus experienced first-hand the open hostility between the two peoples. Cole soon became convinced that the Czechs dearly wanted to throw off 'German domination' and that the time was not too distant when even the famous spa-town "Carlsbad might have to be called Karlový Vary." (2) In 1898 the sportsman, Randolph Hodgson was also struck by the mutual antipathy between Czechs and Germans, ascribing this, like Cole, to the inescapable and obvious fact

their characters and temperaments were polar opposites. Hodgson was not impressed by the Czech peasants who, he claimed, "displayed all the customary traits of melancholy and fatalism exhibited by the Slav peoples generally." In comparison "the assiduously hard-working German townsman" left his slavonic compatriots in the shade.(3) It was quite obvious to Hodgson that the Czechs had no real love for Austria or the Habsburgs but seemed to have an almost mystical reverence for the great Slav colossus in the east- Russia. While in his view it could only be a "pipe-dream", nevertheless, many Czech peasants seemed to believe that one day they too would form part of this great empire. The conflict between Czechs and Germans acted as a catalyst in opening Hodgson's eyes to the existence of the many other nationalities existing within the confines of the Habsburg Empire, and he concluded:

"Austria's peril lies in the fact that she consists of a conglomeration of particles, each of which wishes to be independent of the others."(4)

This point had, in fact, been made some fifty years earlier by the clergyman, Peter Turnbull, in his two volume travelogue and history of Austria:

"Austria has also her points of weakness, although not to the extent to which it has been occasionally observed. It is no infrequent consideration, that the various members of the empire hang loosely together; and that differing as they do in language, habits, and somewhat in interests, a slight shock would suffice to produce a great convulsion."(5)

Even in 1840 Turnbull had been struck by the deep-seated antipathy on the part of the Czech population of Bohemia vis-à-vis the Germanic element and had emphasized that the Habsburg government knew that it could not "invade their national feelings with impunity."(6) However, in Turnbull's view the greatest source of potential conflict within the Empire lay in the problematic relations between the Austrian Germans and the second most powerful nationality-the Magyars of Hungary: a fact amply confirmed a few years later in 1848-9 when the Magyar nobility tried to throw off Habsburg rule altogether. The maxims of government in the two countries were, Turnbull argued completely different:

"While the monarchical principle is dominant in Austria, the aristocratical is absolute in Hungary. Thus, under

such circumstances, it is hardly to be supposed that either party should render justice to the views and intentions and feelings of the other."(7)

Curiously, though, other travellers such as D.T. Anstead, a Professor of Botany at Cambridge University, seemed to be blissfully unaware of any national antagonisms within the Empire. During the Spring of 1862 Anstead travelled quite widely through Hungary and Transylvania and claimed that Magyar like Czech was a dying language and that it would not be long before both languages died out altogether.(8)

It can be said that ever since the abortive Magyar rebellion of 1848-9 the Magyars, in particular, had held a special place in the affections of those Englishmen and women who knew anything at all about the Austrian Empire. However, this knowledge was often very superficial and British Liberals, in particular, seem to have been easily deluded into believing that the Magyars were just like themselves- a freedom loving people- trying to shake off the 'tyranny of the Austrian Habsburgs.' Adept at fostering this image of themselves (in modern parlance their 'Public Relations' were excellent) the Magyar nobility successfully beguiled such visitors from England as the London barrister, J. Toulmin Smith in 1849 and even, initially, the great Slavonic and East European scholar Robert Seton-Watson at the beginning of the 20th century. (of whom more in the next chapter.) Carried away by the Magyar nobility's claims to a long constitutional history with their own version of the English Magna Carta and a parliament that had curtailed the absolute power of the Crown, Toulmin Smith devoted an entire book to the alleged similarities between the British and Hungarian constitutions.(9) This prima facie similarity was in fact reinforced by the behaviour of many members of the Magyar nobility who frequently visited England and consciously modelled themselves on their English counterparts, besporting themselves in Tweeds à la Saville Row and riding to hounds. Not infrequently Magyar aristocrats made a point of sending their sons to either Cambridge or Oxford to finish their education. Given this scenario, it is scarcely surprising then that English Liberals gained the distinct impression that the Magyars were the only people of any significance outside of the

German speaking population of the Habsburg Empire, and the only ones really at odds with it. The clergyman, Turnbull, was in fact one of the very few to pierce the veil of constitutional deception in which the ruling élite of Hungary cloaked themselves, remarking:

"A feudal and privileged aristocracy is little likely to cherish the Western doctrines of liberalism and democracy, whatever some of my compatriots may think." (9a)

This favourable opinion of Hungary in the eyes of British travellers was in large measure a reaction to the disparaging comments made about it in the western half of the country, particularly Vienna. Austrian friends of H. Ellen Browning merely excited her curiosity when they told her to avoid the "semi-barbarous" land in the east, and duly resolved to go there. Finding that her friends remarks were not borne out by her own personal experience Ellen Browning became enthusiastic about all things Magyar. The upper class circles in which she moved, regaled her with all that old world charm and hospitality for which the Magyar nobility were reknowned when wanting to create a favourable impression, that she failed to cast a critical eye at the economic and social conditions in which the majority of the population, Magyar and non-Magyar lived. The heroic tales told about the revolution of 1848-9 reinforced her enthusiasm. It was, she said, one of her deepest regrets that she had not been there to stand at the side of the great Hungarian poet Petöfi like Madam Jokai. (10)

If Ellen Browning could be deceived at the end of the 19th century when opportunities for travel were greater, it is scarcely surprising that visitors in the first decades of the century were even more so. Both Richard Bright in 1815 and John Paget in 1839 came to Hungary with similar negative views after what their Austrian friends had told them, only to emerge Magyar enthusiasts like Browning: "Nothing can compare", Paget roundly declared, "with the noble simplicity of Magyar hospitality." (11)

In 1906 a delegation from the Liberal Eighty Club were the guests of the Hungarian Independence Party, which had just won the elections that year and which the delegation naïvely

believed to be "the natural friends of English Liberals." (12) Since the British Liberal Party had just won a decisive victory over the Conservatives 1906 seemed to be an auspicious year for both British and Hungarian Liberals. Yet some members of the delegation at least had nagging doubts about their hosts' political credentials for in the book recounting their experiences it was declared:

"It has been objected that the Independent Party of Hungary is not a liberal party. It is true that its prime aim is not to affect political and social reforms, and that it has risen by supplanting the old Liberal Party of Hungary. But it has many of the qualities of all Liberal Parties; it insists on the right of the people to govern themselves through their parliamentary representatives and institutions; it is also a reforming party; its present programme as set out in the paper of Mr. Kossuth read at our Conference comprises many proposals of social reform. But at present the supreme issue is that which England had to face in the days of George III: whether the people should work out their own programme through their elected representatives and a ministry supported by parliament, or should submit to a non-parliamentary rule of Ministers selected by the Crown." (13)

Yet, this being said, what is particularly striking about the book is that there was absolutely nothing said about the living conditions of the many other nationalities that made up the Kingdom of Hungary- let alone the fact that the Hungarian franchise was one of the most restricted in Europe with barely 7% of the population eligible to vote. Once again the impression is left that the British visitors had been beguiled by the traditional charm and hospitality of the Magyar nobility.

If the Eighty Club had failed to appreciate the fact that Hungary was ruled by an essentially oppressive oligarchy, masquerading as democrats for the benefit of impressionable foreign visitors, Peter Turnbull had gauged the real position 60 years earlier. He had argued that for all their bluster, the Magyar nobility knew, au fond, that were Hungary to separate from Austria- as the Independence Party claimed it wanted to do- then:

"Short would be the period ere their castles and their persons would be swept away by the horrors of a ferocious servile revolution." (14)

In fact, the truth of this prognosis was amply demonstrated in 1848-9 when the other nationalities of the Kingdom, notably

the Croats under Ban Jellačić had helped the Habsburgs crush the Magyar revolution. Perspicaciously too, Peter Turnbull had realized that a 'Great Hungary' could in fact only exist in conjunction with Austria:

"Were the connection dissolved then not only their defence against popular insurrection would be removed but the Magyar nobility would then face unaided the ill-concealed hatred borne them by a semi-barbarous peasantry consisting of many other nationalities." (15)

Magyar enthusiasts and propagandists in Britain tried to make great play of the theme that Hungary had been a bastion of Western Christian civilization for centuries against the 'semi-barbaric East', particularly in the struggle against the Ottoman Turks. Thus, it was argued, the crushing defeat of the Hungarian army at Mohács in 1526 and the death of King Louis II were not just Hungarian tragedies but disasters with a European wide significance. Yet the Magyar enthusiasts maintained Hungary, although beaten, was not broken and in the 17th century finally regained her freedom from Moslem rule—admittedly with the help of the Imperial Habsburg army under Prince Eugene of Savoy. (Treaty of Karlowitz 1699.) The Hungarian Minister for Commerce published an extensive history of the Magyar nation in 1897 under the title 'The Millennium of Hungary and Its People' which highlighted Hungary's role "in the defence of those Christian values held so dear by Britain and France." (16) Indeed, it was argued, that the Magyar people as a whole had regarded this as a sacred trust ever since the first Christian King of Hungary—Stephen—had received his crown at the hands of the Pope in 1000 A.D.

A particularly adroit propagandist for the Magyar cause in London was the President of the Hungarian Society, Louis Felberman, who organized the 40th anniversary celebrations of the accession of the Emperor Franz Joseph to the royal throne of Hungary in 1867. (17) The author of several books and pamphlets on Hungarian history his magnum opus was Hungary and its People, which appeared in 1892. Decked in the Hungarian national colours of green, white and red (18), it was essentially an extended paen of praise to the Magyar race. Reading it, one is reminded of the words of the Russian philosopher Vladimir Soloviev in his criticism of the Slavophiles in his own native

Russia:

"If we are to believe what the Slavophiles say of the Russian people then we must regard this people as some kind of Pharisee, righteous in its own eyes, 'extolling' its virtues in the name of humility and ready to wipe other peoples off the face of the earth in order to ensure the complete triumph of its own gentle and pacific nature." (19)

Indeed, mutatis mutandis, the same was true of Felberman's Magyars: brave, generous, pure, incorruptible, hospitable, courteous to a fault, they were a fine body of men and women in every respect, mentally and physically. Indeed their dominant position in east-central Europe was not just the result of their numbers and legendary military prowess, but Felberman maintained, "by reason of their intellectual superiority." (20)

Interestingly, Felberman did mention one of the other nationalities of the Kingdom of Hungary in some detail- the Slovaks- but unlike Robert Seton-Watson's account somewhat later, he was completely uncritical of their life under Magyar rule. In fact Felberman stressed the benevolent attitude of the Magyars vis-à-vis this small Slavonic people and even declared that the Slovaks were fortunate indeed to be ruled by such a caring people that allowed them a large measure of cultural and political autonomy. Although of a completely different race from the Magyars, the Slovaks were, Felberman maintained, infinitely better off than their Russian cousins who lived under their own native government, which was doubly repressive towards other slav nationalities such as the Ukrainians and Poles. In spite of this 'benevolence' and 'solicitude' Felberman admitted that the Slovaks remained low down on the rung of the ladder of civilization but rather than ascribe this to any fault on the part of the Magyars, he declared this to be merely the reflection of the innate inferiority of the Slavs. Thus:

"Yet whilst the Magyars are now one of the most cultured and advanced races in Europe, there being scarcely a peasant who cannot read or write, the Slovaks, on the other hand, remain as almost as ignorant as their ancestors were in the time when Arpád conquered Hungary, and therefore we must come to the conclusion that the Slovaks are inferior to the Magyars." (21)

Felberman laid particular stress on the supposed 'racial inferiority' of the Slavs which made the dominance of the Magyars an inevitable part of the natural order of things. While there was hope that the up and coming generation of Slovaks might amount to something, there was no denying the fact that the Slovak peasants "are naturally far inferior to the Magyar peasantry." (22)

Not surprisingly, Joseph de Jekelfalussy, quoted extensively from Felberman's book, when editing the propaganda volume 'The Millenium of Hungary and Its People' before adding his own patronizing conclusion:

"Their powers of apprehension are somewhat slow, but they are fit for every kind of work and are industrious..For the most part they are patriotic, but Panslavistic agitators in gentleman's clothes have in some places succeeded in deluding the simple folk." (23)

In general, however, writers on Hungary made only a passing reference to the Slovaks. Such was the case with Arminius Vambéry's book 'Hungary, In Ancient, Medieval and Modern Times', published in the Story of The Nations series in 1890. Although the book is nearly 450 pages long there is only one solitary reference to the Slovaks on page 37.

In a very real sense Vambéry could claim that he was not wilfully deceiving his readers because the publisher had asked him not to write "the History but the Story of Hungary"-effectively giving him carte blanche:

"to present the various phases of the history of Hungary in the light best suited to attract the attention of the citizens of England, to whose opinion we Hungarians are by no means indifferent." (24)

Here, at least, was a candid admission that the Magyars consciously set out to elicit a favourable impression of their country from an English audience and, therefore, would not allow a few uncomfortable facts spoil a good story: to 'poetic licence' there was thus to be added 'historical licence.'

Of the other nationalities of Hungary such as the Serbs, the Croats and the Wallachs (Roumanians), there was again only a cursory reference and then solely to illustrate the problems the Magyar nobility had had "in their struggle for liberty" against the machinations of the Viennese government that had incited these peoples against them. All in all this work may

very well be considered a kind of apologia pro vita sua of the Magyar nobility, whom Vambéry claimed, were "destined to fulfill the mission of the citizen classes of other countries" since it was largely from their ranks that a modern commercial and professional bourgeoisie was being recruited. (25)

In his attempts to explain, if not excuse, the dominance of the nobility in Hungarian political life, Vambéry was forced to mention "the humiliations of the oppressed peasantry." (26) The implication was clearly that, since the living conditions of the vast bulk of the population were so poor, only the nobility were capable of challenging the Magyar aristocracy allied to Vienna and creating a modern liberal and constitutional state. Not surprisingly therefore, Vambéry hailed the Ausgleich with Austria in 1867 as the ne plus ultra of Hungarian constitutional liberty in which:

"the ancient kingdom of the Magyars, whose wonderfully elastic national vitality had withstood so many vicissitudes and disasters, again takes a commanding place among the nations of Europe." (27)

As in a classic Hollywood romance one is tempted to say: "...And they all lived happily ever after." This certainly seems to be the implication, since, although published in 1890, the history or rather 'the story' of Hungary effectively comes to an end in June 1868 when Franz Joseph and his wife, Elisabeth are crowned King and Queen of Hungary.

Probably the most extensive account of Hungarian history to appear in the first years of the 20th century was that of the English lord C.N. Knatchbull-Hugesson, whose two volumed work 'The Political Development of the Hungarian Nation' was published in 1908. While Knatchbull-Hugesson did not ignore the other nationalities of Hungary, as Vambéry had done, he was, nevertheless, equally dismissive of them, but in a rather more sophisticated way. His line of approach was that the other nationalities of the Kingdom were in fact of little consequence, having played an insignificant part in Hungary's history, as they themselves admitted. Moreover, the subject nationalities were ready to acknowledge the Magyars as the leading nation not only on the basis of their right of conquest but also on account of their sheer intellectual and moral

superiority:

"The Hungarian state was founded, built and defended by the Magyars and all its institutions bear the stamp of their ideas...Indeed, the other nationalities played no part in this development and the less advanced races were only too eager to bear the impress of Magyar nationality." (28)

To substantiate this view, Knatchbull-Hugesson pointed to the examples of the Hungarian revolutionary leader Louis Kossuth and the great Hungarian national poet Alexander Petöfi, both of whom were in origin magyarized Slovaks. As for the reported discontent amongst the other nationalities- which in fact could no longer be denied- this the English baronet ascribed to "Habsburg intrigues" and the perfectly understandable "Magyar consciousness of superiority." (29) In other words the government in Vienna had cunningly connived at, if not actively fostered, the growth of nationalist sentiments amongst these 'lesser races' in order to 'dish the Magyars' (épater les Magyares) in the time-honoured Habsburg policy of 'divide et impera.' Whereas before, men such as Kossuth had been proud to be accepted as members of the Magyar nation since they recognized a higher degree of culture and civilization, now Slovaks, Roumanians, Serbs etc., were being encouraged to disparage it and to resent this natural superiority. (30)

It may be said that Knatchbull-Hugesson's implicit belief in 'historic' and 'non-historic nations' of which the Magyars were clearly an example of the first, and the Slavs the second, was by no means unusual at this time, and which had even been initially shared by Marx and Engels during the 1848-49 Revolutions. (31)

A rather more objective commentator on Hungarian reality was Geoffrey Drage, whose book *Austria-Hungary* was published in 1909. This work was in fact a detailed study of the Monarchy as a whole and most of the material for it had been collected by Drage and his wife during a wide-ranging trip through both Austria and Hungary in the autumn of 1908. While Drage too acknowledged "the intellectual prowess of the Magyar nobility", nevertheless, he underlined "the bitter class animosity" that existed in Hungary and the fact that although:

"since 1848 the peasant was no longer the property of the owner of the soil, he has, notwithstanding that, been virtually his chattel, and if ill-treated, his only redress has been emigration." (32)

There was in Hungary, moreover, a blatant 'pecking-order':

"The Magyar peasant, for his part, never forgets that he is one of the dominant race, and treats the peasants of other nationalities with good-humoured insolence." (33)

Drage also drew attention to the fact that "despite 40 years of untrammelled Magyarization 40% of the population do not know the language of the state" and that, ominously, for the Magyar nobles:

"In 1895, under the pressure of this Magyarization, the nationalities held a congress, at which they drew up a fighting programme. Roumans, Serbs, and Slovaks, declared themselves in favour of dividing Hungary into territories mapped out on a language basis. Over this Tower of Babel they propose to place a federal Empire," (34)

The Magyars, Drage concluded, were making a fatal miscalculation: by pursuing their policy of Magyarization; they were not only antagonizing the other peoples of Hungary but also "the Roumanians of Roumania and the Slavs of Austria, Russia and the Balkan States." Needless to say "they were also alienating the many well-wishers that Hungary possesses in English speaking countries." (35)

Nevertheless, while alluding to Italian irredentism as a potential danger to the Austrian half of the Monarchy, Drage remained, on balance, optimistic, saying:

"In spite of racial and religious differences, in spite of internal and external dangers, the dual Monarchy will still remain a European necessity..and in fact the warlike races of the Habsburg realm may go far towards realising in Europe the proud device of the Emperor Frederick III: 'Austria shall be the last on earth.'- Austria erit in orbe ultima." (A.E.I.O.U.)" (36)

With the exception of a few travellers like Drage and his wife, very little was known about other parts of the Habsburg Empire on the part of the majority of the British population. Admittedly, the nomenclature of the Empire did not help matters but tended to add to the confusion. Thus, Slovenia, Slavonia and Slovakia, aside from being virtual *terrae incognitae*, were a particular source of confusion. The actual political relationship between Hungary and Croatia was nothing short of a mystery and while the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina

had made a brief impact on the consciousness of the British public in 1878 at the time of the Congress of Berlin, and again, more dramatically, with the Annexation Crisis in 1908, the complexity of the racial and religious problems existing there was barely understood. As far as the Czech lands were concerned, principally Bohemia, perhaps a little more was known but then that was not saying very much. After all as late as 1938 Neville Chamberlain speaking of Czechoslovakia could say: "A far off country of which we know nothing."

Ironically, it was a German called Count Francis Lützow who made it his business to inform the British people about Bohemia. Originally, his family came from north Germany and they settled in the country during the 18th century. Although a German noble Lützow became an enthusiastic supporter of the Czech national cause, which not only made him persona non grata in the eyes of the large German minority in Bohemia, but also aroused the not unjustifiable suspicion of certain sections of the Czech people. However, Lützow was quick to repudiate any suggestion of an ulterior motive. He disclaimed any suspicion that this was a cunning ploy to enable him and his class to continue 'lording it' over the Czech peasantry in the advent of a Czech national state as the Magyar aristocracy had done in Hungary. Indeed, he pronounced himself a democrat and was only too willing to renounce all privileges associated with the nobility as a token of his good faith. (37)

A career diplomat by profession Lützow arrived in London in 1873 and set about writing numerous pamphlets and articles on Czech culture and history, paying particular attention to Jan Hus and the Bohemian reform movement in the 15th century. A gifted speaker he gave the Ilchester lectures in Oxford on the historians of Bohemia in 1904 and then in 1908 helped to organize the highly impressive Czech section of the Austrian exhibition in London. (38) On the eve of war in 1914 Lützow had the dubious honour of having the Czech edition of his History of Bohemia confiscated by the Austro-Hungarian government. A back-handed compliment since it was at least a testimony to his sincerity for the Czech national cause.

Although Lützow dubbed his History of Bohemia "a

historical sketch" it was, in fact, over 300 pages long, giving a detailed account of the country's history from Roman times up to the first decade of the 20th century. One of the principal themes of the book was the alleged attachment of the Bohemian people to western concepts of liberty, justice and democratic ideas and, *pari passu* with this, a deep-seated hostility to rule by Germans. The exclusion of Austria from the German Confederation in 1866 by Prussia was, Lützow argued, a blessing in disguise since "the link that bound the unwilling Bohemians to Germany was severed." (39) It was ironic, however, that the Czech people's loyalty to the House of Habsburg at a time when the German population of Bohemia was enthusing over Prussia's success, should go completely unrecognized by the government in Vienna, once again demonstrating the traditional 'ingratitude of the House of Austria':

"It is a bitter saying in Austria that those nationalities which support the government suffer, and those who oppose it are rewarded. The Hungarians had been on the verge of rebellion during the campaign of 1866 and had even formed a free corps to support the Prussians. The Bohemians, on the other hand, had remained loyally and undauntedly faithful to the dynasty. Yet in the year following the battle of Kralové Hradec, Hungary obtained almost complete independence while Bohemia's demand for autonomy was rejected." (40)

Lützow was extremely pessimistic about the future since Count Aehrenthal's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 had unwittingly or otherwise "made Austria more subservient to Germany since Austria had to rely on Germany to carry it safely out." (41) In fact the position of the Czech people was potentially worse than before 1866: "dark clouds seem to hang over the future of Bohemia," Before that date Austria had at least been the leading Germanic state but now she was increasingly in thrall to her former arch rival Prussia in the unified German Reich. It was Lützow's main fear that "German influence in Austria will become greater" and "that influence is always used against Bohemia and in favour of the German minority of that country." (42)

While Count Lützow was the most significant person to inform the British people about the Czech people and their

homeland there were native Englishmen too, of whom C. Edmund Maurice was probably the most important. In 1896 Maurice, who had travelled widely throughout Bohemia, was commissioned to write a history of the country for the Story of the Nations series. In the Preface to his work he made the following interesting observation:

"few countries have been more strangely misunderstood by the average Englishman than Bohemia has been. The mischievous blunder of some 15th century Frenchman, who confused the Gypsies who had just arrived in France with the nation which was just then startling Europe by its resistance to the forces of the Empire, has left a deeper mark on the imagination of our countrymen than the martyrdom of Hus or even the sufferings of our own Princess Elisabeth." (43)

Unfortunately, while Maurice's work was extremely informative as far as the early history of the Czechs was concerned, the history effectively concluded with the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620 and the abolition of the country's autonomous status by the Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand III. Somewhat curiously, there was in fact only a cursory chapter on modern times- Chapter XVIII,

Nevertheless, in dealing with the early history of the Czechs in such detail, it was a seminal work and together with Lützow's work it introduced the British public for the first time to the existence of a large slavonic empire and its ruler Svatopluk, to whom the Byzantine monks, Cyril and Methodius, originally brought the Cyrillic alphabet in the 9th century.

Another commentator on Bohemia was James Baker, who could best be described as a 'professional tourist.' Baker had taken particular interest in the Hussite movement and became quite an expert on it, writing a book on one of Jan Hus's most prominent followers, Peter Payne under the title 'A Forgotten Great Englishman; or the Life and Work of Peter Payne, the Wycliffite.' Baker was also the author of a general survey of the Monarchy entitled 'Austria: her People and their Homelands' which was a useful introduction to a comprehension of the multi-national and multi-racial entity encapsulated in the term 'Austria.' As well as being a great traveller, Baker was also an artist of some talent and in his

'Pictures from Bohemia, drawn with pen and pencil', he gave the British public a good idea of the landscape and beauty of 'this far-off country.' (44)

Several other writers also gave a sympathetic account of the Czech people and their country as a result of this Protestant connection. Such was, for example, Bishop Creighton in his 'History of the Papacy', H.H. Milman in his 'History of Latin Christianity' and Lord James Bryce, whose magnum opus 'The Holy Roman Empire' devoted equal space to Jan Hus, the Bohemian Reformer and the 14th century Bohemian King and Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV of the House of Luxemburg. The latter's Golden Bull of 1356 which was supposed to regulate, inter alia, the procedure for the election of the German King and so-called 'Roman Emperor' was wittily described as "legalizing anarchy in the guise of a constitution." (45)

However, these enthusiasts for the Czech national cause were few and far between in the English-speaking world and if comparatively little was known of Bohemia, knowledge of the other lands of the Monarchy was even scantier. It is true that several histories of the Danubian Monarchy did appear in the second half of the 19th century but, regrettably, they did not cover the whole of the period. Such was the case with W. Coxe's 'History of the House of Austria', originally published in two volumes in 1807 and then enlarged to four volumes in 1853. (46) A two volume 'History of the Court and Aristocracy of Austria' by E. Vehsel was published in English translation in 1856 and then an enlarged edition of this work, taking the story down to 1888 appeared in 1896. However, this work dealt mainly with the deteriorating relations between Czechs and Germans in Bohemia with only passing references to the many other national problems which bedevilled this polyglot Empire. (47) 1889 saw the appearance of Louis Leger's 'History of Austria-Hungary' from the earliest times to the year 1889 with a foreword and preface written by E.A. Freeman (48), but of greater importance were the works of Sidney Whitman, Francis Gribble and Francis Palmer.

Sidney Whitman wrote two major works on the Habsburg Monarchy: 'The Realm of the Habsburgs', published in 1893 and 'Austria',

which was yet another volume in the Story of The Nations series, published six years later. Both works set out to convey to an English-speaking audience the sheer complexity of the Empire and its extraordinarily chequered history, of which the British people, as a whole, were only dimly aware. This was a point which Whitman laid particular stress on in his Introduction to The Realm of the Habsburgs, drawing attention to the fact that this was somewhat curious since the two countries had often been allies in the past:

"To many Englishmen the very term 'Austria, or- as this at one time most powerful country in Europe is called since the Covenant of 1867 (i.e. the Ausgleich) 'Austria-Hungary'- conveys a somewhat hazy geographical as well as political idea. And notwithstanding that England and Austria have been allies on many momentous occasions and fought side by side on many a hard-fought field, who will, say too, that tomorrow some political complication may not again arise and suddenly concentrate the attention of Europe on the banks of the Danube? (Prophetic!) The country itself is comparatively seldom visited by tourists from the west of Europe, and is even less read about. Thus it is that this most fertile, as well as most picturesque part of the Continent- lavishly endowed as it is by nature- is as little known to us as are the character of its many inhabitants, their many racial distinctions, and their varied social and political life." (49)

As a consequence Whitman went on to give a general conspectus of the various peoples and classes that made up the Monarchy, which his history of Austria complemented six years later. In this latter work Whitman emphasized that this lack of political and national homogeneity was a serious political weakness in the modern world where nation states predominated: (50)

"The distribution of these various elements-Slavs, Magyars, Germans, Roumanians, Italians and Jews- over the Empire is very important from a political point of view. They are very different, one from another, in respect of manners, language, religion, and customs, have opposing interests and independent systems of government, and are practically foreign to one another except for the community of Imperial control. The resulting phenomenon is physical weakness as a whole, together with a difficulty to combine as one nation when threatened by foreign Powers. (51)

All in all, Whitman was to remark:

Austria-Hungary gives the impression of forming the natural, gradual stage of transition between Western civilization and that of the East, which extends with little variation from the gates of Constantinople as far as the great wall of China." (52)

Yet, Whitman argued, there was no denying the fact that the political weakness of the Empire did not detract from the endless fascination which it offered foreign visitors. Indeed the Monarchy's manifold national and religious divisions enhanced this fascination. One is reminded of the remark in Goethe's *Faust vis-à-vis the Holy Roman Empire*, of which, of course, the Monarchy through the Habsburgs was a direct descendant: 'Das liebe Heil'ge Römische Reich, wie hält es zusammen?'

"To the observant stranger who visits Austria thankful for a change from the eternal sameness of our cosmopolitan civilization, all these divisions and elements offer many attractions. Moreover, the absence of West European tourists, particularly those of an objectionable type, enables one to enter into the feelings for indigenous life and character in a manner that is well-nigh impossible in such tourist-ridden countries as Switzerland, Italy, France and Germany." (53)

Two other interesting works were to appear in the ten years preceding the First World War: Francis Palmer's 'Austro-Hungarian Life in Town and Country' in 1904 and 'Austria of the Austrians together with Hungary of the Hungarians', written in English by L. Kellner, Madame Paula Arnold and Arthur L. Delisle- the first part of which has already been referred to at the beginning of this chapter. (53) The second part of this work was particularly interesting for the stress laid on the fact that to all intents and purposes Hungary was practically an independent state. Thus, Delisle, who wrote the second part on Hungary, declared:

"Though the Emperor of Austria and the King of Hungary happen to be the same physical person, he is juridicially two persons, his prerogative in the one case being entirely different from his prerogative in the other. For instance, while in Austria the people have only such rights as the Emperor has allowed them, in Hungary the position is reversed and the King has only such rights as the people have allowed him in the Constitution. In Austria the Emperor may issue ordinances that have the force of law, even to collect taxes and levy recruits: in Hungary the King may do nothing of the kind. If he should attempt to do so, any officials who dared to do so in his support would be guilty of high treason and dealt with for that capital crime. As in the laws of all civilized nations it is an act of treason for a subject of the King of Hungary to appeal to the Emperor of Austria." (54)

En passant, one may remark that wits had already drawn attention to the multi-juridicial, constitutional position of the Habsburg ruler in 1848-9. As Emperor of Austria Franz Joseph had declared war on the King of Hungary and appealed to the King of Croatia and Slavonia to execute his orders--all three monarchs being himself. This secular trinity of 'Three in One and One in Three' effectively required a degree of quasi-political schizophrenia on Franz Joseph's part in order to function at all.

While this work gave a generally very positive view of the Monarchy, Palmer's 'Austro-Hungarian Life in Town and Country' struck a more discordant note. Palmer had travelled extensively throughout the Empire and was both a good listener and an acute observer. Refusing to accept anything *prima facie*, Palmer made a point of trying to see 'behind the scenes', quoting with approval an astute observation by one Austrian politician to the effect that:

"I always feel at home in Carlsbad, since it represents so exactly the political condition of Austria-Hungary. A crust that covers what is supposed to be a vast subterranean lake of boiling water." (55)

The metaphor was an apt one: While it would be an exaggeration to say that the Empire was actually 'seething' with national antagonisms, nevertheless, at times, it was certainly boiling. *Mutatis mutandis*, what Governor Dewey was later in the 1940's to say of New York-- "it's not a melting-pot, but a boiling-pot"-- was true of Austria-Hungary as a whole--even if this has to be qualified.

That proceedings in the Reichsrat in Vienna and provincial Diets in places like Boemia were often reduced to chaos by this internecine political warfare, Palmer noted with some dismay:

"It is one of the most curious features of Austro-Hungarian life that there is not one of the many races that make up the inhabitants of the Dual Monarchy that is not regarded with hatred, or fear, or aversion, or contempt by all the others. The universal feeling towards the Jews is unquestionably one both of hatred and fear, while the Gipsy is neither feared nor hated but looked down upon by all the other races with contempt. The general feeling towards the Armenians lies halfway between the two." (56)

Palmer went on to enumerate all the various conflicts between the different nationalities, laying particular stress on that between Czechs and Germans in Austria and between Magyars and 'Wallachs'- i.e Roumanians- in Hungary.(57)

Palmer rightly saw that the 'Nationality Question' was the Achilles heel of the ostensibly still powerful Habsburg Empire. It was, in his view, "the subtle poison which seems to penetrate into every phase of Austro-Hungarian existence." (58) That the Emperor Franz Joseph was 'au -dessus de la mêlée', as far as national antagonisms were concerned, (reflecting the multi-national, cosmopolitan nature of the Habsburg dynasty) was, Palmer admitted, a positive feature of the monarchical system in Austria-Hungary, where the Emperor "rules as well as reigns." (59) Palmer noted with approval Franz Joseph's role in protecting the Jewish population of Vienna, extending on one occasion to a direct order to the city police to disperse an increasingly violent demonstration against the Jews by the Christian-Social Party. The Emperor also made it clear that he took particular exception to the anti-Semitic rhetoric of the party's charismatic leader, D. Karl Lueger, refusing to endorse him as Burgomaster (Mayor) of Vienna in 1895 and only reluctantly agreeing when the Council, dominated by the Christian-Socials, put forward his name again in 1897. (60) In a light-hearted remark Franz Joseph once quipped: "I may have to change one of House's ancestral titles from 'King of Jerusalem' to 'King of the Jews.'" (61) Not surprisingly the Emperor was held in particular esteem by the Jewish people of the Empire.

En passant Palmer wondered how long it would be before rival nations would be willing to settle their differences by a 'Parliament of Man' rather than having recourse to *vi et armis* on the battle-field. In this respect, he argued, the actual condition and experience of Austria-Hungary was not encouraging since:

"Here we have an almost exact model in miniature of what the 'United States of Europe' would be upon a large scale, and one in which we find the same disruptive elements which would soon tear an international federation to pieces." (62)

A scenario which Karl Kraus was later to immortalize in

his description of Austria-Hungary as "a laboratory experiment in world-destruction" in his book 'The Last Days of Mankind.' (63)

Even before Robert Seton-Watson had delineated the full importance of what was to become known as the 'South-Slav Question', this author had become increasingly aware of it, drawing an interesting analogy with Great Britain:

"There is much in the relations of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Slavs of Southern Austria and Hungary that recalls the difficulties that the British Government is occasionally called upon to meet in Ireland...These Southern Slavs bear about the same proportion numerically to the other inhabitants of the Dual Monarchy that the Irish do to the total population of the British islands." (64)

Unlike other commentators, Palmer also drew attention to the growing appeal of socialist ideas: not just among the workers of Vienna but amongst the Slavonic population of the Monarchy as a whole:

"The industrial system of a country inhabited by such varied races as Austria-Hungary is extremely interesting and given a generation or two of peace and internal tranquillity, Austria-Hungary may develop an economic system of her own, differing widely from Western Europe. This is indicated by the steadily growing influence of the Slavonic races...For all the Slavs the principle of co-operation has a peculiar fascination that almost invariably attracts them towards one or other of the many forms of socialism. The Slavonic ideal in Austria, as well as Russia, has always tended in the direction of groups of small manufacturers co-operating with one another, rather than vast industrial concerns in the hands of a single owner or controlled on behalf of a company by irresponsible autocratic managers." (65)

All things considered, Palmer's work, although little known, represents an important and wide-ranging survey of the Monarchy in the early years of the 20th century, rivalling that of the clergyman Peter Turnbull some sixty years earlier, in 1840.

The work concluded on a somewhat sombre if not pessimistic note. While Palmer was convinced that the Habsburg Empire was still in Professor Palacký's fortuitous phrase "a European necessity", nevertheless, he felt obliged to add:

"The existence of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is a matter of such extreme importance to the peace of Europe, that the apparent instability of the foundations upon which it rests is by no means reassuring. For the moment the tact and prudent statesmanship of the Emperor Franz Joseph may be relied upon to maintain a certain degree of unity among the mutually hostile elements that

form his Empire, but the fact that the nature of the Federal government necessarily throws so vast a responsibility upon the Crown is itself a reason for regarding the future with uneasiness... Austria has weathered many a storm in the past, but will she be able to do so when the hand of the Emperor Franz Joseph no longer guides the helm of State." (66)

Turning from general surveys of the Monarchy one may note the publication of several interesting biographies of the Emperor Franz Joseph: that of Francis Gribble's being fairly critical while that of the anonymous author of 'Keystone of Empire: Francis Joseph of Austria' was laudatory- if not hagiographic. (67) In his work 'The Life of the Emperor Francis Joseph', published on the very eve of the First World War, Gribble emphasized that in a state as peculiar- and one might say as 'accidental' as Austria- the person of the monarch was, naturally, of supreme importance, for:

"Austria is not one of the 'inevitable' countries, like England and Spain, bound to have a separate existence under some form of government or other because of their geographical situation and the national characteristics of their inhabitants. There is no Austrian nation: only a medley of races which detest each other, bound (but by no means welded together) for the supposed convenience of the rest of Europe, and unified only by the fact that its component parts all appertain to the dominions of the House of Habsburg.

It follows that the personality of the Habsburgs matters in a sense in which the personalities of rulers who are mere figure-heads does not matter." (68)

Not surprisingly then, Gribble devoted considerable time to a discussion of eugenics and heredity and, particularly, to the reputed 'lunacy and degeneracy' of the Habsburg family through the custom of close intermarriage. Somewhat whimsically, Gribble came to the conclusion that:

"The family, taken as a whole, is mad, but that certain isolated members of it have been as sane as the rest of us, and abler than the majority- and Franz Joseph is one." (69)

Nevertheless, however capable Franz Joseph might be, did not detract from the fact that in a growing democratic age the Emperor's attitude towards peoples and nations was essentially reactionary, since paternalism and despotism were opposite sides of the same coin.

"The Emperor of Austria (is) also King of Hungary, King

of Lombardy, King of Bohemia, etc., etc., -the head as it were, of an ancient firm formed to carry on the general purposes of government in central Europe, and regarding men and women merely as material to be governed." (70)

So much in fact depended upon the personality of the Emperor that Gribble doubted that the Empire could survive his demise. The prestige and evident affection in which he was held by many of his subjects could not conceal a fundamental weakness: the growing antagonism of the Monarchy's slavonic population towards the Imperial Government:

"The real rivalry of the Europe of today and tomorrow is the rivalry between Teuton and Slav...As long as Teutons are anywhere ruling over Slavs, no policy of 'live and let live' is feasible; and as the Slavs increase in numbers and in racial self-consciousness, the clash is bound to come. When it does come- when the unredeemed Slavs, assisted by the unredeemed Roumanians, insist upon their redemption- Austria will have played her part on the stage of European History and the curtain may be rung down." (71)

Such a conclusion, of course, was not unusual or original. But perhaps Gribble's most interesting contribution was that he fully appreciated the horns of the dilemma on which the Habsburg dynasty seemed, inescapably, stuck- not just Franz Joseph but his would be successors Franz Ferdinand and ultimately Karl: to accomodate the Slavs was to antagonize- perhaps fatally- the Germans and Magyars:

"Admitted to the Empire on equal terms, they (the Slavs) will be in a position to control it- to control the Austrians and Hungarians who have hitherto controlled them. If that were allowed to happen, the condition of things created might be as intolerable to the Austrians and Hungarians as is the existing state of things to the Slavs...and, if the Habsburgs do take this step, yet another 'unredeemed' question will be raised: the question whether the Teutonic portion of the Habsburg dominions should not be regarded as German irredenta... Slav predominance in Austria might easily create a Pan-germanist party in Austria and indeed the nucleus of such a party already exists there." (72)

Thus, as far as Gribble was concerned, Franz Ferdinand, the Heir Apparent's plan for "the transformation of the Dual Monarchy into a Triple Monarchy" with a Kingdom of the Slavs as the third member, was unlikely to be "a panacea" (73), however bold the conception might be.

The second biography by an author, who, according to Gribble was "well known in America as a journalist" (74) but who nowhere gave her name, was mainly an anecdotal history, consisting of examples of the Emperor's warmth and humanity, especially in his compassion for the poor and the children of the poor. For the 'anonymous author' Franz Joseph was a veritable 'pater suae patriae', regarding the many disparate peoples of his Empire as "children entrusted to him by God" and whose welfare was in fact his principal *raison d'être*. The Emperor's chief worry was that his "childrens' seemingly interminable squabbling" would prove fatal for both the Empire and the Dynasty when he was gone. (74)

Quite obviously, an ardent monarchist, the author could wax indignantly on the Emperor's behalf at the apparent lack of gratitude that 'his children' showed him by their continual quarrelling. In fact she seemed to regret that Franz Joseph was not more like the stern Roman 'paterfamilias' of old:

"Sixteen nationalities, more or less alien and hostile to each other, are not amusing toys, or pets to be quieted with sugar, but a many-headed hydra, exceeding ravenous and even bloodthirsty, which cannot be led about by chains of meadow daisies or sent to sleep to the sound of soothing lullabies. Indeed, the hopelessness of ever completely reconciling them seems great, and there is but one man who has ever bridled this cruel and ungrateful monster- namely, Francis-Joseph, who truly is the 'Keystone of his Empire.'" (75)

Nevertheless, in a calmer moment, the author could acknowledge that the Emperor's personal popularity with his peoples was never seriously in question- quoting with approval a remark by his opponent, Napoleon III that:

"He (Franz Joseph) was the only monarch in Europe who, returning to his capital after defeat (and there were several defeats) could be welcomed by his people not only with unimpaired loyalty, but even with enhanced devotion, affection and enthusiasm." (76)

Not quite so romantic or anecdotal was a short history cum travelogue by J.W. Gilbert-Smith which appeared in 1907 under the title 'The Cradle of the Habsburgs.' As the title indicates this work dealt with the early history of the Habsburg family in the Aargau valley, now part of Switzerland. One chapter was headed 'England and the Habsburgs'

and Gilbert-Smith made the interesting observation that if Mary Tudor's marriage with the son of the Emperor Charles V, Philip II of Spain, had led to the birth of a son, then England might very well have found itself incorporated into the Habsburg Empire.(77)

Shortly before the outbreak of the First World War two other works of interest on Austria appeared: one was yet another biography of Franz Joseph by R.A. Mahaffy, which tended to take a more sympathetic view than that of Francis Gribble's. The other work was Austria-Hungary by G.E. Mitton. Covering basically the same ground as that of Geoffrey Drage's book it, nevertheless, adopted a less critical approach.(78)

As far as the journalistic world was concerned, it is a remarkable fact that while all the major British newspapers had correspondents in Vienna, the British public was often at a loss to fully understand the information being given to it- and that, of course, assuming that the British people had any inclination to do so in the first place. Apart from the British Empire itself interest in foreign affairs was scarcely at a premium. Interest in continental affairs was not high and in Austria-Hungary even less. A survey of readers' opinions and interests carried out by the editor of The Times, Moberly Bell, well illustrates this point. As the paper's Vienna correspondent, Henry Wickham Steed, noted in 1902, out of some 1700 replies only one actually mentioned foreign affairs of any interest at all and that was only because the lady in question had a son who was a tea-planter in Assam.(79) This lack of awareness and knowledge was such that even towards the end of the First World War The Times felt obliged to point out that the Czechoslovak soldiers who had seized control of parts of the Trans-Siberian railway on their way to join the Allied forces on the Western Front were neither Russians nor Siberians. In fact the very idea that these soldiers had once been members of the Austro-Hungarian army who had either defected to the Russians or been captured by them and now wanted to continue fighting after Russia's withdrawal from the war in 1917 was utterly baffling.(80)

Then again, the comparatively few individuals who did show any interest in the 'strange' polyglot empire on the Danube often received a distinctly parti pris view of it, from the supporters of German and Magyar hegemony, at the expense of the many other nationalities. Thus, as Edmund Maurice recalled:

"The few who care to hear anything more of a people like the Czechs- so strangely slandered- have often been yet further blinded by their readiness to accept as absolute truth the prejudices of the German and Magyar opponents of the Bohemian national feeling. From these sources they have derived an impression of a set of narrow Ultramontanes who, oddly enough, combine their religious bigotries in favour of Roman Catholicism with a reliance on Russia in political affairs." (81)

James Baker, too, had been astounded to discover that while researching his book on Wycliffe's follower, Peter Payne- both influenced by Jan Hus- he had never come across any English names in the numerous Bohemian churches and castles he had visited. This was more surprising in that Prague was only four hours by train from the Saxon capital of Dresden, a popular venue for British tourists. (82) Count Lützow also drew attention to the fact in his book 'The Story of Prague' that he had never heard of any one from Britain having made the journey. (83)

All things considered, it would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that not only a veil of ignorance but also of mystery hung over the political and cultural relations between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary. In marked contrast one might add to the relations between Austria-Hungary's chief ally, Imperial Germany and Britain. Nevertheless some speculation did exist about the possible fate of the Monarchy on the part of those who at least knew something about it. In these quarters it was felt that the Monarchy was unlikely to survive the death of its octogenarian ruler Franz Joseph, especially as the Emperor himself had grave doubts about it. Indeed Franz Joseph might very well have echoed the remark of Louis XV: "Après moi le déluge!" In fact he came close to doing so shortly after the turn of the century when he said: "We are an anomaly amongst the states of Europe" and again on the eve

of the First World War: "If we must go under, then let us go under with honour!"

If Gladstone had declared in 1880 that "there was no spot on the world map where you could lay a finger and say: 'Here Austria did good!' and that he regarded the Monarchy as merely "a brilliant second of the German Empire"(anticipating, in fact, the Kaiser's later comment about Austria being the "brilliant second on the duelling-field"), yet British statesmen believed overwhelmingly in preserving it.(84) Even 'gun-boat' Palmerston, who had once said in his customary colourful manner that "the Austrians were the biggest beasts on earth" reversed his initial enthusiasm for the Hungarians in 1848/49 once they had actually deposed the Habsburg dynasty, even rejoicing in their suppression by the Tsar.(85) In the last analysis the Monarchy was regarded as an essential element in the time-honoured British tradition of the 'Balance of Power.' The Habsburg Empire was considered a useful counterpoise to the imperial ambitions of both Russia and, initially, Germany too. It was only when, in the latter case, this no longer seemed to be true and the Monarchy was seen to be functioning, nolens volens, as a satellite of Berlin rather than an independent power, that attitudes began to change.

The Habsburg realm also had another *raison d'être* in the eyes of British politicians: it represented order and stability in a part of Europe that was becoming increasingly chaotic and unpredictable. The gradual disintegration of Turkey-the so-called 'Sick Man of Europe'-and the rise of belligerent states like Bulgaria and Serbia made British statesmen fearful that the anarchy now spreading in the Balkans in the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th might very well reach Central Europe unless the Monarchy were retained. It can be said then that the Habsburg Monarchy only made a significant impact on British consciousness in times of crisis when it was regarded as, *faute de mieux*, 'Europe's watchdog in the East.'

CHAPTER II

HENRY WICKHAM STEED AND ROBERT SETON-WATSON

There can be little doubt that the two most informed and astute commentators on the Habsburg Monarchy in the English-speaking world were the journalist, Henry Wickham Steed and his friend, the historian, Robert Seton-Watson. Steed was born to a Liberal family in East Anglia in 1874 and originally intended to pursue a career in the City of London before turning to journalism- "a very funny business, needing a funny sort of mind", as his City employer put it.(1) As preparation for his new vocation Steed enrolled in two of Germany's most prestigious universities, that of Jena and Berlin. Initially highly impressed by what he saw, this enthusiasm was soon to wane and after moving to France and Rome to take up the post of Times Correspondent he became increasingly critical and suspicious of Germany's ultimate political ambitions, especially since Prussia had gained such a dominant influence in it. Prussia in his view had effectively prussianized Germany rather than being absorbed by it as many had hoped in 1871.

It was while in Rome that Steed first set about the task of investigating the vast polyglot Empire on the Danube, ruled by the oldest dynasty in Europe-the Habsburgs. This stood him in very good stead for when he became The Times's Vienna correspondent in 1902. For the next eleven years, in fact, apart from a brief spell of six months in Constantinople, Steed was to remain in the Austrian capital before returning to England in November 1913. Although Steed's visit to the Ottoman capital was short it was there that he became convinced that Germany's aim was nothing less than European and world hegemony and contrary to what the Foreign Office thought, the Young Turk revolution of 1908 was part of this plan. Steed was, therefore, scarcely surprised when the Ottomans finally declared for Germany and Austria-Hungary in 1915. Somewhat bizarrely, Steed also came to believe that the Young Turk government was as much under 'Jewish influence' as German- his second particular *bête noire*.

However, it was the fate of the Habsburg Empire that became Steed's passion *exceptionnelle* and his eleven years in

Vienna gave him an unparalleled insight to the problems that bedevilled it, particularly the problem par excellence-'The Nationality Question.' The result of this study was his magnum opus, 'The Habsburg Monarchy', published in 1913.(2)

Although, with the passage of time, Steed became more and more critical of the Habsburgs, he, nevertheless, claimed to be "a true friend of Austria" and to have done "more perhaps than any other European writer to discredit the legend of the 'inevitable break-up' of Austria." (3) Until the war, at least, Steed remained broadly sympathetic of the Empire, hoping that it might yet free itself from the suffocating embrace of the prussianized Germany of the Hohenzollerns, the Habsburg's old foes. If the Monarchy could do this, then coupled with a programme of internal reform, the Empire might very well look forward to a bright future.

Steed's principal aim in writing *The Habsburg Monarchy* was to fully comprehend how such a polyglot entity could possibly survive in an era of increasingly strident nationalism, seemingly, at complete variance with the proverbial *Zeitgeist*. Further he intended to show that its destruction- were it to come about- could only be as the result of a catastrophe such as a general European war.(4)

Steed began with the observation that in Austria-Hungary "most things have another than their surface meaning" and fulfill another than their ostensible function." (5) Appearance and reality can be very dissimulating, as Hegel would say. Thus, the Habsburg dynasty had to be considered *sui generis* and not on par with the royal houses of west European states, since the power of the Emperor was much greater. Similarly, the Austrian and Hungarian parliaments were not comparable to the parliament at Westminster, their powers being much more restricted. After 1908 Austria, if not Hungary, had universal suffrage but popular control of the government was heavily circumscribed by the Imperial prerogatives. It could not be denied that the Austro-Hungarian state was in a category of its own.

Unlike the Czech professor, Palacký, in 1848, Steed did not regard Austria as 'un état de convenance'- "a useful lumber-room or scrap-heap for broken or detached fragments

of other peoples."(6) Nor, did he believe that the Empire was merely an accidental conglomeration of peoples with little in common except their mutual dislike of one another, the whole edifice ripe for destruction at the least external shock or the demise of the aged Emperor Franz Joseph.(7) Steed acknowledged that "in an epoch of democratic control...the power of the Austrian Crown may well seem anachronistic" but if Austria were to be understood than "current political notions had to be set aside" and the power of the Crown could actually be viewed as a "positive force for good."(8) At this time Steed's position was essentially, certain problems apart, such as the 'Nationality Question', there was no real reason for the Empire to lose "its rightful place in the European community" and that the crises that afflicted it could even be seen as "symptoms of growth rather than decay."(9)

Although Steed's original intention was to depict the Monarchy in a sympathetic light, ironically and paradoxically, as the work progressed, it became rather an indictment of it, as he explicitly acknowledged in the Preface to the fourth edition.(10) The work was, in fact, to mirror his own political and intellectual development. Malgré lui, so to speak, Steed was led to the conclusion that the prime concern of the Habsburg monarch was the welfare of the dynasty and that the state as such was viewed as if it were his own personal domain or estate:

"So much attention has been paid to single aspects of the Austro-Hungarian problem, and so much stress laid upon its complexity, that the essential character of the Habsburg Monarchy as a dynastic estate has been lost sight of...The peoples of Austria are the peoples of the Emperor almost in a feudal sense...lands, peoples, and men are the Habsburgs' raw materials."(11)

However odd it might prima facie appear, the Emperor behaved almost like an oriental despot. As a consequence, it was hardly surprising that Steed should quote, with obvious approval, the famous remark of the great Austrian Chancellor, Clemens von Metternich that "Asia begins on the Landstrasse!"(12) The leitmotif of Habsburg policy was in fact "exalted opportunism in the pursuit of an unchanging dynastic idea."(13) It was further well-known that 'the thanks of the House of Austria' was a byword for "ingratitude par excellence" since people and

that it was not until the dramatic collapse of Magyar resistance to the Emperor's authority in 1906 over the Common Army bill that the essential nature of the Dualist system within the Monarchy became apparent to him. The Emperor had threatened the Magyar nobility with the introduction of universal suffrage in the Hungarian half of the Empire unless they ceased agitating for a separate army with Magyar as the language of command. "Common and united as it is, My army shall remain." (17) On this fundamental issue Franz Joseph would brook no concession or compromise. Regrettably, however, Steed realised, once the Magyar nobility had given way, the Emperor eschewed any thought of electoral reform which left the Magyar élite in control of the Hungarian Kingdom to the detriment of the Magyar peasantry and the subject nationalities alike. Thus, Steed reasoned, the Dualist system was essentially the means by which the Austrian Germans in alliance with the Magyar nobility shared power with the Emperor in Vienna, excluding all the other peoples from an effective role in government. (Epitomized by the celebrated remark of Count Tisza later to Count Berchtold: "You look after your barbarians and we will look after ours.") But this was not all. All three parties were shackled to the Wilhelmstrasse as a result. The army crisis of 1906 had in fact convinced Steed that the French writer, Louis Eisenmann had 'hit the nail on the head' when he first ventured this interpretation of the Dual Monarchy in his book 'Le Compromis Austro-Hongrois' in 1904. (18) Steed was to return to this theme in numerous articles during the war and to give it an emphasis which he did not actually do in *The Habsburg Monarchy*. (19)

According to Steed, it was now clear, après Eisenmann, that the crucial year in the history of the Empire in modern times had been 1866 when the Prussian 'Blitzkrieg' at Königgrätz (Sadowa) had destroyed the centuries old Habsburg pre-eminence in Germany for ever. In fact Austria had been excluded from Germany completely. This shattering defeat had compelled Franz Joseph, nolens volens, to come to an agreement (Ausgleich) with the numerically and politically most powerful ethnic group, the Magyars (after the Germans that is) and one

and peoples were viewed from the Imperial perspective purely in terms of their usefulness or otherwise to the dynasty.

"No influence, be it that of a statesman, a party or a race, is ever suffered long to prevail over the influence of the Crown. Hence, perhaps, the Habsburg reputation for ingratitude...but one which must strike the Habsburgs themselves as singularly unjust. Why should the Habsburgs be grateful? Their statesmen, their officials are their servants, whose duty it is to obey, to execute orders, to offer advice, and to disappear when their period of usefulness is over. Is it not enough that they should have been allowed to collaborate in the fulfillment of the great dynastic purpose? The Emperor Francis, to whom a man was once recommended as a patriot, remarked, "They call him a patriot for Austria, but is he a patriot for me?"(14)

In their own eyes God's representative on earth, opposition to their rule was almost tantamount to sacrilege and thus the desire for the Italian subjects in Lombardy and Venetia or the Serbs of southern Hungary to be united with their kinsfolk in the kingdoms of Italy and Serbia, respectively, was not only politically threatening, but morally reprehensible-wicked even. The loss of Lombardy and Venetia was a continual source of pain and astonishment to Franz Joseph and not unlike the feeling of George III for 'his American colonies.'(15)

After the break-up of the Habsburg realm in 1918 Steed was to declare that it was not so much the 'external shock' of the First World War that had brought about the Empire's demise but rather the inability of the Habsburgs even, in extremis, to adjust to the modern Zeitgeist of democratic self-government. However well-meaning Franz Joseph and the last Emperor Karl might have been, the many diverse nationalities of the Empire were no longer willing to be governed in paternalistic fashion from on high and treated as if they were "merely tribes of an Asiatic sultanate."(16) For Steed the Habsburgs claim to some kind of "moral and ethical superiority" was to be fatally compromised by the Zagreb and Friedjung treason trials in 1908/9, in which, on the basis of forged documents, the Austro-Hungarian government had tried to prove that the leaders of the Serb-Croat coalition were in treasonable collusion with the government in Belgrade.

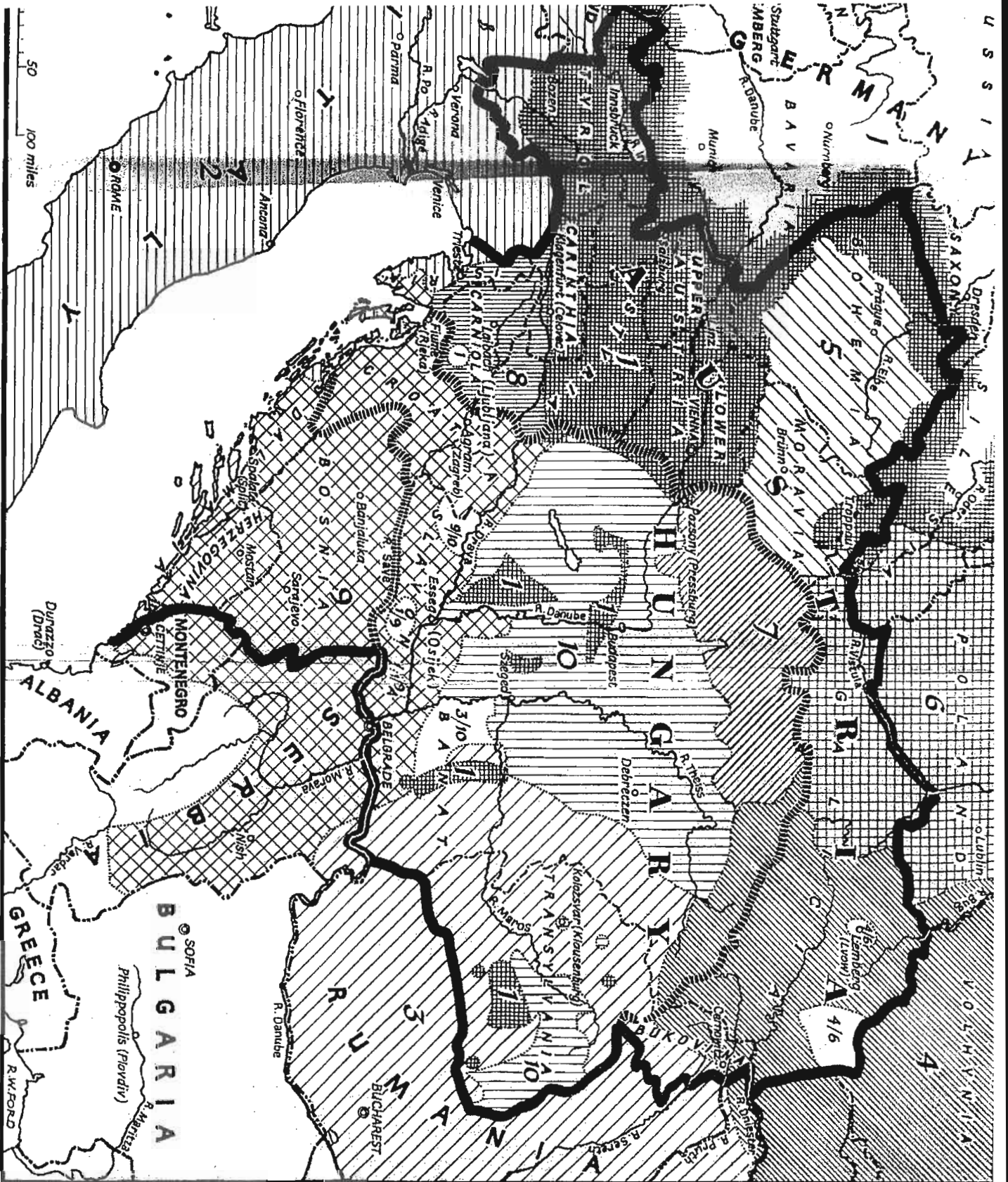
In his autobiography, *Through Thirty Years*, Steed said

which gave them such sweeping autonomy in the 'Lands of the Crown of St. Stephen' (the historic name for the Kingdom of Hungary) as to make that country a quasi-independent state. Hungary, however, contained many other peoples- Slovaks, Roumanians, Serbs and Croats- who, in fact, formed nearly (Figure I. 60% of the population, and here, after 1867, the Magyar aristocracy and gentry made a crucial and fateful decision. Instead of listening to the advice of Francis Déak and Eötvös to conciliate the other nationalities by giving them a share in the government, they embarked upon a policy of 'magyarization' which only had the result of fuelling the resentment of the other peoples, whose own national consciousness was rapidly developing. Franz Joseph had been willing to come to this compromise in order to secure the Empire's military and political unity in a projected war of revenge (Revanchekrieg) against Prussia. (Ideally, perhaps, a temporary expedient in Franz Joseph's mind.) In a very real sense, however, both parties miscalculated. Since the Magyar nobility were only too aware that their newly privileged position within the Empire rested on Prussia's victory at Königgratz they could hardly be expected to support a war of revenge which might very well undermine it again. On the other hand since the Magyars had chosen a policy of repression rather than conciliation they needed the Emperor as much as he needed them. Whether they liked it or not Habsburg support was essential to their control of the subject nationalities. This had important implications for Britain too.

"The Magyars, if harmoniously united with the other Hungarian races, the Austrian Slavs, will be strong enough to act as a brake upon the House of Habsburg, if it should ever wish to side with Germany against us in a European war. If, on the contrary, the Magyars are at loggerheads with one half of the Hungarian population, they will not only be reduced to impotence but will feel, as they now feel, all the enmity of the twenty-five million Austro-Hungarian Slavs who as anti-Germans are now on our side." (20)

Whatever the Magyar nobility may have thought, in spite of their extensive autonomy that the Ausgleich of 1867 had given them, they were still locked in to the Empire, given

FIGURE 1



German	1
Italian	2
Rumanian	3
Ruthene	4
Czech	5
Polish	6
Slovak	7
Slovene	8
Serbo-Croat	9
Magyar	10
Mixed	9/10

Boundaries:

- International
- Provincial
- Austro-Hungarian Empire
- Kingdom of Hungary

the anti-Slav (and anti-Roumanian) policy they had chosen to follow. Rather than 'emancipating themselves' from the rule of the Austrian Habsburgs, they were in fact, closely welded to them; a policy which was likely to prove to their ultimate detriment.

As for the Austrian Germans in the western half of the Monarchy, they, too, realized that their strengthened position vis-à-vis the Crown, owed everything to Prussia's victory at Königgrätz- a point which Bismarck realized was of immense political significance for the new German Reich. All the while the Austrian Germans held sway in Vienna, the Habsburgs could scarcely pursue an anti-German policy let alone contemplate a Revanchekrieg against Prussia.

If the Ausgleich had indeed been a temporary expedient forced upon the Emperor by the defeat of 1866, Prussia's subsequent victory over France in 1870-71 and the consolidation of her power in the new Reich (which now included both north and south Germany) meant that any remaining thoughts of revenge had to be "relegated to the limbo of lost hopes." (21) Franz Joseph, it is true, did make one final attempt to regain his freedom of action by having himself crowned King of Bohemia in Prague, the capital of the 'Lands of St. Wenceslas'- the Czech equivalent of the Magyar 'Lands of St. Stephen'. This plan, however, was to come to nought owing to the united opposition of the Austrian Germans, led by Count Beust, the former Saxon Foreign Minister and arch-opponent of Bismarck and the Magyars, headed by Count Andrassy, supported strongly by Bismarck. This inherent threat to the Dualist system was sufficient to override the mutual antipathy between Beust and Bismarck, and the combined pressure of all three parties compelled Franz Joseph to abandon the 'Bohemian Transcripts'- i.e. the planned coronation. The conclusion of the Dual Alliance in 1879 put the final seal on the Dualist system so that even the later pro-Slav policy of Count Taaffe (the so-called 'Iron Ring') did not seriously challenge it. Even Bismarck was able to accept Taaffe's discriminatory policy vis-à-vis the Austrian Germans once he realised that the alliance with Germany was in no way undermined. As long as the two ruling races, the

Germans and Magyars were prepared to furnish men and money for the army, Franz Joseph was willing to reconcile himself to the Dualist system. However, when the German Liberals in 1879 and the Magyars in 1903-6 proved obdurate and fractious he had no qualms about threatening them with an alliance between the Crown and the subject nationalities. Universal suffrage was the effective 'Sword of Damocles' that Franz Joseph held over the heads of Germans and Magyars alike.

It was Steed's view that the Dualist system was not only unfair to the other peoples of the Empire, but that it was also contrary to the real interests of the Monarchy itself. The Habsburgs were in fact mesmerized by the memories of the defunct Holy Roman Empire of which Austria had been the leading state for centuries:

"They (the Habsburgs) perceived too late the true nature of their task- the humbler but more essential work of welding Hungary, Bohemia and the "hereditary dominions" into one solid block- and when they at last addressed themselves to it, found that their chance of success had been perhaps irretrievably, compromised by engagements they had contracted towards Hungary in a last vain hope of reversing the verdict of history." (22)

The Monarchy, Steed predicted, was heading for disaster if it continued "clinging to traditions that events have far to render obsolete." (23) The very fact that the largest ethnic group within the Empire were Slavs meant that:

"by pursuing an anti-Slav policy it was courting disaffection at home and placing itself abroad in a position of subservience to Germany." (24)

Now that in 1913 the bulk of the Balkan peninsula was constituted into independent states, the truly "enormous question" facing the Monarchy was quite simply "could it bring its home and foreign policy into closer harmony with the numerical balance of its peoples" or would it stubbornly cling to the past? Unfortunately, Steed surmised "precedent suggests that the dynasty will cling to tradition" as dynasties are historically prone to do, but this policy was hardly tenable in the long run. (25) In fact:

"The Habsburg Monarchy has but one sure way of escape from its difficulties into a more prosperous and tranquil future- the way of evolution...towards a form of internal organisation better adapted than the Dual System to the permanent needs of its peoples." (26)

Steed quoted with approval a remark by a "far-sighted

Polish statesman of little Russian stock"that "the ideal form of the Monarchy was a Slav house with a German facade" but however admirable this might be, all would depend upon:

"Whether the House of Habsburg will be able so to adapt itself to altered circumstances as to renounce its ancient traditions and to content itself with the prestige that comes of ruling over peoples free to manage their own affairs and spontaneously loyal to the Monarch as their Supreme Moderator." (27)

This was, of course, the proverbial '64 dollar question.' That the Dualist System had to go, Steed had no doubt- for in the last analysis it was "a system of political paralysis in which immobility became the only pledge of equilibrium." (28) Yet, neither in nature or human society, was "immobility" a viable option. The maxim was rather: Adapt or perish!

Thus, paradoxically, the tenor of Steed's book was quite at variance with the premises of the Introduction to the first edition. The Zagreb and Friedjung treason trials in 1909 had in fact had forced Steed to so reconsider his views on the Monarchy and its ability to reform itself, that he was already considering a 'Plan B.': turning directly to the subject nationalities themselves.

Thus, reflecting back on this period in his Autobiography, Steed remarked:

"Consequently, I began in 1909 and 1910 deliberately to study the balance of ethnical forces in Austria-Hungary and to take counsel with the leaders of the non-German and non-Magyar races. Most of them I knew already, though I had formerly been inclined to consider their aspirations chimerical. Now, I had come to see in those aspirations the only means of saving the Habsburgs from themselves and, incidentally, of saving Europe from a catastrophe- or, in the worst hypothesis, the only safeguard against the ultimate success of German schemes for the mastery of Europe and the East." (30)

On this last point Steed was to argue that Bismarck had been doubly artful in 1878 in persuading the Congress of Berlin to sanction Austria-Hungary's occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, since not only had this diverted the Habsburgs from thoughts of recovering their hegemony in Germany and Central Europe, but also by embroiling them in Balkan affairs made the Monarchy-nolens volens- Germany's catspaw in her Drang nach Osten? All this however, without expending "the

bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier." (31)

As late as the autumn of 1912, however, Steed was still reluctant to accept that the Monarchy might seriously decide on war as the means to solve the problems facing it but he increasingly feared that:

"The subterranean struggle...between the Slav nationalities of the Monarchy and the German and Judaeo-Magyar elements that are the props of the Dual System is now reaching a turning-point." (32)

Moreover, for the first time Steed had the acute sense "that the existence of the Monarchy is really in danger and that only an (apparently impossible) series of brilliant victories or a difficult and patient policy of peace and internal reconstruction can avert this danger." (33)

By the time Steed left Vienna in July 1913 he did so with "a sense of impending catastrophe." (34)

After the treason trials of 1908-9 it was the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina that caused Steed the greatest anxiety as it did the British Foreign Office. In Steed's view the humiliation of Russia by Austria-Hungary's German ally which forced the Tsar's government to abandon its support for Serbia's protest against the annexation, meant that the next crisis to afflict the Balkans would almost certainly end in war. Thus, at the end of 1912 Steed wrote to an 'influential Englishman' that were Austria to attempt the expulsion of the Serbs from the port of Durazzo that they had occupied after defeating the Turks, then Russia would have no choice but to intervene or else suffer complete loss of face not only with her South Slav protégé but throughout the Balkans. Given the system of alliances all the major powers would be dragged in and Britain herself could hardly stand idly by. (35) As early as November 1911 in fact Steed had written to Northcliffe, the founder of the Daily Mail and chief proprietor of The Times that Germany was *éminence grise* behind Austria-Hungary and every means should be taken to ensure that the army was ready for war. (36)

That the annexation would spark off an international crisis was predictable but its significance lay deeper than that. Unlike his friend Robert Seton-Watson who saw the annexation as proof of the Empire's continuing vitality, Steed saw it as the beginning of a fatal *dénouement*, embroiling the Habsburgs

in even greater conflict with the Slavs both within and outside the Empire and further limiting their ability to come to an equitable *modus vivendi* with them. By this act Franz Joseph had made himself and the dynasty the virtual prisoners of the Austro-German and Magyar élite that dominated the Monarchy's political life.

More ominously still, in Steed's view, the annexation, marked the start of Germany's plans to conquer the East, the first link in the chain of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway. (37) Steed gave graphic expression to this view in his article 'What is Austria?' published in the *Edinburgh Review*:

"...I attempted to show how the gradual rise of the Slav nationalities in the Dual Monarchy had become a potential menace to the twin bases of the State laid down in 1867- the preponderance of the German minority in Austria and the Magyar minority in Hungary- with the result that the Germans of Austria and the Magyars of Hungary, under the influence of the German Empire, had driven the Habsburgs into an anti-Serbian and anti-Yugoslav policy, so as to preclude such a solution of the Southern Slav question as might have made the Habsburgs masters in their own house, and have enabled them once again to play an independent part in Europe. The turning-point in this process was the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in October 1908. Aehrenthal, who carried it out, thought he was pursuing an independent policy. He presently saw his error and sought, too late, to retrieve it. Then Germany hounded him to death....disappeared the only potential obstacle to a continuance of the policy which the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina had originally been intended by the partisans of Germany to promote-the overthrow of Serbia, as a preliminary to the opening of the German road to the East." (38)

Steed had no doubts that the Prussian dominated Germany was not only a grave threat to Europe but the world as well, particularly Britain and the British Empire. Regrettably, the Dualist system made Austria-Hungary a useful tool for Germany's ambitions, converting her "into a branch establishment containing a reserve of fifty million souls upon whom Germany could draw for all her needs." (39)

Thus, when war broke out it was scarcely surprising that Steed should argue that in order to scotch Germany's plans it was essential that the Monarchy be fundamentally transformed, or, if necessary- *horribile dictu*- destroyed. (40) Steed's article 'What is Austria?' argued that the Austrian Germans,

were willing accomplices of Berlin and their allegiance to the dynasty was a mere cover for their real allegiance to Germany and the 'German Idea'. Steed substantiated this latter point by references to the many remarks in the Reichsrat by the pan-German Nationalists of Georg Schönerer and the annual pilgrimages of the pan-German youth to Varzin and Friedrichsruh in Germany to pay homage to Bismarck. Bismarck himself had said that the Austrian Germans could best serve the wider interests of Germany by ostensibly remaining within Austria and loyal to the dynasty.(41)

Quite clearly, Steed maintained, Bismarck had given the game away. In maintaining their dominant position in the western half of the Monarchy the Austrian Germans would immensely facilitate Germany's penetration of the Near East, which would be seriously undermined if they sought the incorporation of the German-speaking provinces of Austria into Germany itself leaving the rest to go their own way.(42)

Pari passu with this line of reasoning Steed had come to view the other nationalities of the Empire in a much more favourable light, and was, therefore, prepared to countenance a Europe without the Monarchy. Like Seton-Watson and Sir Lewis Namier, Steed was particularly impressed by the Czechs and at a Sokol rally in Prague in 1912 paid homage to their resilience:(43)

"When a people- which was literally decapitated in the 17th century by the Habsburgs acting as instruments of the Jesuit Counter-Reformation, and was thereafter reduced to vassalage and downtrodden in every way, with a foreign aristocracy foisted upon it and the whole power of the Habsburg State used to crush its aspirations towards freedom- when such a people can preserve the grit and tenacity to achieve what the Czecho-Slovaks have achieved, it has absurdely a claim to a better future and a strong title to the esteem and goodwill of the civilized world."(44)

Steed was now looking very much askance at so-called German 'Kultur' which was profoundly at variance with the humanistic, liberal and Christian values which he believed underpinned British and French society. Germany in contrast possessed a militaristic and Nietzschean attitude to life, emphasizing, inter alia, the survival of the fittest. Thus, in Steed's own mind idealism and the British national interest neatly dovetailed so

that triumph in a war with Germany would lead to the victory of those values that he held dear- Liberalism, National Self-Determination and Democracy- the progressive Godhead and Secular Trinity, so to speak, of the 20th Century.

Steed displayed an interesting Weltanschauung, combining great sympathy for the oppressed peoples of Europe with an acute concern for the living conditions of industrial workers in modern capitalist society, although he was a firm opponent of international socialism.(45) Somewhat curiously, Steed seemed to believe that Britain could play the role of 'protector' vis-à-vis the smaller Slavonic nations and more effectively than that of Russia. While it was gainsaid that Britain could scarcely hope to compete with Russia for the affections of the Czechs and Slovaks on the basis of racial affinity, nevertheless, Steed believed that Britain could act as a model of liberal and democratic traditions more in keeping with their 'true spirit' than the Byzantine and autocratic traditions of an Orthodox and quasi-Asiatic Russia. Writing to McClure on July 1915 Steed said that he feared not only the immediate danger of German domination in Europe but the potential for Russian domination in the future which would be equally against Britain's interests..(46) Consequently, the creation of a number of moderately strong states out of the body-politic of Austria-Hungary would have the advantage of blocking the expansionist aims not only of Germany but Russia too. Alongside this pragmatism, however, there was also a large degree of idealism. Steed hoped that the creation of such states would ultimately lead, at the international level, to a genuine 'League of Nations! Once freed from the arbitrary restrictions of the Monarchy which had tolerated if not encouraged mutual racial and national antipathies on the basis of 'divide et impera', such states would come to realise the benefits of genuine co-operation. Of course, it might be argued that Steed displayed a remarkable degree of optimism in believing that what could not be achieved within the confines of the Monarchy could be more easily achieved outside it. Given the notorious rivalry of the Balkan states it is also curious that Steed should consider the effective 'Balkanisation' of Central Europe a

progressive development- but then again, it was a question of 'Needs must where the Devil drives!' Defeating Germany was the immediate concern and everything else was a secondary consideration in comparison. Hope it seems was left to triumph over experience, as Oscar Wilde said of second marriage. Be that as it may, only by stressing the danger that Germany represented and Austria-Hungary's part in German plans could Steed hope to Convince both the proprietor of The Times, Northcliffe and the paper's readers that the Monarchy would have to be destroyed, however regrettable that might otherwise be.(47) Steed's enthusiasm for the Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs grew in direct proportion as the difficulty of defeating Germany. Only if the Allied Powers could elicit their active support could the Central Powers be defeated, and consequently every encouragement should be given to the National Committees, headed by Masaryk for the Czechs and Supilo and Trumbić for the Yugoslavs. Exiles from Austria-Hungary found a ready refuge in Steed's home just like his office at The Times and it seems that friends visiting him often looked under the tables and chairs to see if any of the exiles were hiding there. Several of Steed's closest friends were so disconcerted by this "obsession with the Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs" that they seriously wondered whether it had upset the balance of his mind.(48)

The other great British authority on the Habsburg Empire was the Scotsman, Robert Seton-watson, who was often to write under the pseudonym 'Scotus Viator'- a Scottish traveller. Of 'bonnet laird' or yeoman stock, Seton-Watson was born in Perthshire in 1879 and after going to Winchester went up to New College, Oxford, where he studied under the great H.A. L. Fisher, whose hostility to the Habsburgs was well-known. Under his aegis Seton-watson made a detailed study of the Habsburg dynasty in the 18th century and in 1901, a year before his graduation, won the Stanhope Historical Essay prize for his monograph on an earlier Habsburg ruler, the Holy Roman Emperor, Maximillian I.(50) Thus with considerable background knowledge Seton-Watson went abroad to study, first to Paris and Berlin and then in 1905 to Vienna, where he announced his intention to write a comprehensive history of Austria since the reign of the remarkable Habsburg ruler, the Empress Maria Theresa in the 18th century.(51)

1905 was in fact a momentous year in European history since Russia was in throes of revolution after her disastrous defeat by Japan and Austria had been dragged to the Conference table in Algeciras to support German pretensions in Morocco, being labelled, somewhat patronizingly, as "the brilliant second on the duelling ground." Internally, the Monarchy was wracked by a severe constitutional crisis as the Magyar nobility persisted in their attempts at gaining a separate Hungarian army by a policy of political obstructionism. Franz Joseph had struck back by dissolving the parliament in Budapest and threatening the nobility with the introduction of universal suffrage which soon brought about their capitulation. In the past the astute manoeuvrings of the Hungarian Liberal Party had induced many British Liberals of the Gladstone school to believe that it was a progressive party but the events of 1905-6 graphically revealed the hollowness of the Magyar nobles's liberal and democratic pretensions. In these circumstances, then, it was hardly surprising that Seton-Watson, a Liberal of the old school, should, initially, turn his attention to Hungary. Like Steed, Seton-Watson did not care for either Vienna or the Viennese and this tended to reinforce his favourable preconceptions about Hungary and all things Magyar. However, this enthusiasm was soon to evaporate when he went to Hungary during the elections of 1906 to gather material for a study of Calvinism- being a Calvinist himself. Forewarned by Dr. Karl Renner in Vienna that Hungary suffered from an acute nationality problem, Seton-Watson was to return to Vienna completely disillusioned, complaining bitterly to Steed: "They lied to me! They lied to me!" In fact, Seton-Watson was never to forgive the Magyar nobility and reinforced his determination to gain justice for the oppressed subjects of Serbs, Croats, Slovaks and Transylvanian Roumanians. (52)

In his seminal work 'Racial Problems in Hungary' Seton-Watson recalled the impact which his first visit to the country made on him, as follows:

"During my first tour in Hungary I was predisposed to accept every word that fell from the lips of a Kossuthist as gospel, and it was only very slowly that the truth began to penetrate through the armour of suspicion

which I donned whenever I met a non-Magyar. Indeed, I look back now with amusement at the feeling of intense dislike and incredulity with which I first listened to a Slovak nationalist. I only mention this to show that I first visited Hungary as a strong partisan of the Magyars, and that it was only their repeated recourse to evasion and sophistry that shook my faith in the justice of their cause." (53)

As a Scot and therefore a member of a small nation himself, Seton-Watson could readily sympathize with the plight of small nations, and once he became aware of the true position of the subject nationalities of the Kingdom of Hungary he was to become their determined champion for the rest of his life. Just like Steed, Seton-Watson now set out to investigate the vast polyglot empire on the Danube of which Hungary was, after, Austria, the most important constituent part. To fathom Austria-Hungary's very *raison d'être* was his principal aim and he made strenuous efforts to familiarize himself with the many languages spoken within its confines. To begin with Seton-Watson rejected the oft repeated assertion of the Czech professor Palacký that "Austria was merely a diplomatic necessity" seeing rather in the Danubian basin a natural geographical unity which the Monarchy gave expression to politically. Moreover, this natural geographical unity had been given a historical sanction by the long wars fought by Habsburgs against the Moslem Ottoman Turks from the 16th century. For Seton-Watson the Empire's historic defence of Western Christian civilization fully justified its existence as an important component of the European state system.

It was therefore scarcely surprising that Seton-Watson should maintain in his book 'The Future of Austria-Hungary' that "its disappearance would be a European calamity" and that "the Habsburg Monarchy was the pivot of the balance of power", which, for Britain, had always been of supreme importance as far as continental affairs were concerned. (54) That the Empire's existence served the political interests of both Britain and France was a common belief amongst intellectuals as diverse as Louis Eisenmann and André Chéradame, whatever their criticisms of its internal structure might be. (55) Seton-Watson was also anxious to refute, at this

juncture, the widespread belief that the Monarchy was unlikely to survive its octogenarian ruler Franz Joseph. Alongside the tremendous prestige of the Emperor there were also solid foundations in the Army, the Bureaucracy and the Catholic Church.(56) As far as the Balkans were concerned, Seton-Watson was convinced that British interests would be best served by a continuation of the alliance between the Monarchy and Italy.(57) Aware of the dangers of the Pan-German movement, Seton-Watson, nevertheless, believed that it did not represent a credible threat to the Monarchy. The Austrian Germans were still overwhelmingly loyal to the Habsburgs and not just the person of Franz Joseph, in spite of George Schönerer and company, and being Catholic would scarcely regard domination by Protestant Berlin as a welcome scenario. The Czechs would bitterly oppose any move on Germany's part to gain control of the Empire and were the Germans foolish enough to try it, then this would almost certainly spark off Russian intervention and hence a general European war.(58) As for the Italian threat to the Monarchy's territorial integrity, Seton-Watson was inclined to discount it, although he was perfectly aware of the vociferous noises made in Rome about 'Italia irredenta' - principally the Trentino, Trieste and Istria. While Trieste was largely an Italian city, nevertheless, it was economically tied to the lands of the Danubian basin and a war over the Trentino was scarcely worth the trouble.(59) In the last analysis, Seton-Watson believed, rightly or wrongly, that the two countries had more to gain by continued co-operation than by conflict and then again both countries were formal allies and had been so since 1882.(60)

The gravest threat to the Monarchy, Seton-Watson believed, came from Pan-Slavism and Russian Tsardom. It was true that the danger could not be said to be immediate since the great Slav colossus in the east had its own serious nationality problems; but if the day came when these problems were resolved then the Dual Monarchy would find itself in an especially dangerous situation. The appeal of racial affinity could have an irresistible attraction for the Slavs of the Monarchy. It really was a question of life or death as far as

the Empire was concerned to solve its own nationality problems. Indeed Seton-Watson argued "the Monarchy had a duty to do so", so as to justify its continuing existence "as a bulwark against Russia" in the general interests of Europe.(61) If the Habsburgs had for generations acted as effective defenders of Western civilization in the struggle against the Ottoman Turks then they still had this role to play, *mutatis mutandis*, against the latest threat to materialize from the East. Although the 1905 revolution in Russia had led to some progressive changes, the Tsarist régime was still essentially reactionary, anti-liberal and anti-democratic.(62)

Seton-Watson's faith in the Monarchy was such that, unlike Steed, he welcomed the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, declaring quite emphatically in his book 'The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy':

"Since the Bosnian crisis, everyone knows that Austria-Hungary is one of the strongest powers on the Continent, and likely to become stronger, not weaker, in the immediate future."(63)

The introduction of universal suffrage in the Austrian half of the Empire the previous year in 1907 had been carried out with the full support of the Emperor Franz Joseph and this had reinforced Seton-Watson's belief that the Monarchy did indeed have a bright future before it, if only the intransigence of the Magyar nobility could be broken:

"An Austria rejuvenated by universal suffrage, pursuing a liberal and farsighted policy of racial tolerance and forcing the Magyars to abandon their tyrannous designs of hegemony, might rapidly become one of the strongest states on the Continent, and render itself immune from the dictation of either Berlin or St. Petersburg."(64)

The Habsburgs had, in fact, a mission and this was to bring the benefits of Western civilization to all the races and peoples that were to be found within the confines of their Empire.(65) It was essential that they succeed, otherwise the alternative would almost certainly be the creation of a Slavonic Federation under the aegis of Russia, which given the nature of its sponsor, would not only be a mortal threat to Austria-Hungary in the Balkan peninsula, but by the force of attraction to the integrity of the Empire itself. The

victory of Russia over the Monarchy would be the victory of darkness over light, of obscurantism over enlightenment and of quasi-asiatic backwardness over civilisation. (65)

However, for the Habsburgs to be successful in their wider mission throughout South-East Europe it was essential that they solve the most important racial question of all- and that was that of the South Slavs. The problem was a difficult one since the South Slavs were divided amongst five states- Austria, Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and the independent South Slav states of Serbia and Montenegro. Would the Monarchy succeed in attracting the sympathies of the South Slavs or would it alienate them to the advantage of the Kingdom of Serbia which would then act as a South Slav Piedmont, drawing the Monarchy's own Slav population to itself? The Empire's future was, Seton-Watson believed, intimately linked to the Habsburgs' approach to this question, so it was scarcely surprising that he should dedicate his book 'The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy' "To that Austrian statesman who shall possess the genius and courage necessary to solve the Southern Slav question." (66)

Seton-Watson had no doubt that the answer to this problem lay in the union of all the South Slavs- Serb, Croat and Slovene too- under one government. In a letter to Ivo Franko Lupis-Vukić, a member of the Dalmatian Diet, that Seton-Watson met on the island of Korčula in March 1909, he wrote:

"I sympathize strongly with the idea of Croato-Servian unity, but I am convinced that it can only be realised within the bounds of the Habsburg Monarchy, and that its realisation outside those bounds would be desirable neither in the interests of the Croats and Serbs nor in those of Europe as a whole." (67)

The alternative, he believed, that is to say the incorporation of all the South Slavs in the Kingdom of Serbia under the Karadjordjević dynasty, would be disastrous since he regarded "the present régime in Servia as thoroughly corrupt and inefficient- worse than the Hungarian." (68) Like many Western intellectuals Seton-Watson had been scandalized by the brutal murder of King Alexander Obrenović and his wife by military conspirators in June 1903 who put Petar Karadjordjević

on the Serbian throne. Such a solution would be the triumph of the pan-serb idea, i.e. that of a Greater Serbia, which like its counter-part-the idea of a Greater Croatia-could only lead to acrimony and dissension amongst Serbs and Croats, neither of which would be prepared to accept domination by the other. The triumph of a Greater Serbia would be nothing less than "a fatal blow to progress and modern development throughout the Balkans" since "the shade of Stephen Dušan (the Strangler) seems still to hang heavily upon his land." (69) It would also signify the triumph of Russia in the Balkans, something which Seton-Watson never ceased to repeat, was to be avoided at all costs. The solution, as he saw it, was the complete opposite: Serbia should ultimately be incorporated in the Monarchy and this could more easily be done if the Empire were reorganized on 'trialist' lines: an autonomous South Slav state on par with the Magyar and Austrian German states. Thus to Kr̂snjavi, the former Sektionschef (regional minister) for education under the Ban (Governor) Khuen Héderváry in Croatia, he wrote on November 30th: "A trialist state would have such a power of attraction for Serbia that it would be forced to enter the Monarchy of its own free will." (70)

Like Steed, Seton-Watson was convinced that the political union of the South Slavs was bound to come- the question was merely one of how: with Austria or against her? (71) Optimistically, he believed, that it was not inconceivable that both the independent South Slav states of Serbia and Montenegro might be willing to enter into some kind of federation or military and customs union with the Monarchy, not dissimilar to the relationship of the allied German states of Bavaria, Württemberg etc. to the Imperial Government in Berlin. Naturally, however, it went without saying, that these two states would hardly be willing to contemplate such an arrangement if their kith and kin in the Monarchy were being badly treated. Thus the question of the treatment of the Serb and Croat population within the Kingdom of Hungary was the 'Austrian' problem par excellence. In his work 'Racial Problems in Hungary' Seton-Watson stressed this point in the following way.

"The key to the whole Balkan question lies among the

Serbo-Croatian race; and the future of Bosnia and Serbia depends upon the situation in Hungary and Croatia. Thus it is not too much to say that the racial question in Hungary reacts upon all the problems of the Near East, and that the manner of its solution will exercise a decisive influence upon the Balance of Power in the Balkans. The extension of the Hungarian franchise is an event not merely of local, but of European importance, and it is well that the foreign public should realise the gravity of the issues involved.

A genuine Reform Bill is the first step towards a solution of the racial question in Hungary- a question whose continual neglect might prove fatal to the Dual Monarchy and the Habsburg dynasty." (72)

Seton-Watson was to return to this subject many times over the years 1908-14, particularly in his books 'The Future of Austria-Hungary' and 'Corruption and Reform in Hungary, a study of electoral practice.' (73) In common with his friend Steed, Seton-Watson now had the ominous feeling that the Monarchy was moving inexorably towards disaster unless the South Slav population of the Empire could be reconciled and accommodated by some form of federal union. There was no question but that the Dualist system had to go; and here was the sticking-point. The Magyar élite had made it quite clear that they would not tolerate any fundamental tinkering with the system established by the Ausgleich of 1867, lest of all any kind of 'Trialism' which would give the Slavs, as a whole, an equal share in the government alongside themselves and the Austrian Germans. (74) Seton-Watson's experiences in Hungary had shattered for ever his former illusion that the Magyars were a freedom-loving people. He now realised that they were an oppressive oligarchy who, unless challenged and defeated, would bring the entire edifice of the Danubian Empire, which had lasted for centuries, down into ruin and potential oblivion.

That the existence of Hungary as a Great Power depended in the last analysis upon either an alliance between the Magyars and the other nationalities of the Kingdom or else an agreement between Budapest and Vienna, was a fact appreciated not only by Seton-Watson and Steed, but also by earlier commentators such as Peter Turnbull in the 1830's. That the Magyars did not have the resources to oppose both at the same time had been vividly demonstrated in 1848-9 when the Magyar

revolution had been crushed by the Habsburgs with the help of the Ban of Croatia, Jellačić, who had rallied many South Slavs to the Imperial cause against Louis Kossuth. In his book 'Racial Problems in Hungary' Seton-Watson pointed out that a Hungary bereft of support from Austria could hardly hope to hold its own against Roumania and Serbia, both of which had designs on its territory. Left to its own devices Hungary was likely to lose Transylvania to Roumania and the Banat to Serbia:

"Aspirations which are merely ridiculous when directed against the Dual Monarchy, would enter the realm of practical politics as soon as Hungary stood alone." (75)

Seton-Watson's concern for the Monarchy was such that in 'The Future of Austria-Hungary' he made various suggestions for its reform, which as far as the Austrian half of the Empire was concerned, could only be "by a compromise with the supporters of Federalism on the basis of the 'October Constitution' of 1860." (76)

In spite of his fierce criticism of the Magyar nobility's treatment of Hungary's subject nationalities, both in 'The Future of Austria-Hungary' and 'Racial Problems in Hungary' his actual practical proposals for reform were remarkably restrained. Having declaimed so strongly against the dualist system Seton-Watson limited himself to merely urging:

"... some measure of local government for the various races, which would leave the central parliament untouched, and would take the existing municipal and county autonomy as its groundwork." (77)

Indeed in a letter to Professor Esterházy, Seton-Watson had specifically disclaimed any "sympathy for people who want to dismember Hungary at the expense of the Magyars, and even less for those who gravitate towards Russia or Roumania." (78)

However, it was the refusal of the Magyar political élite to even countenance these modest proposals which made Seton-Watson adopt a more radical stance- that of 'Trialism.' This idea, importantly, had the support of the Heir-Apparent Franz Ferdinand, whose dislike of the Magyars and their dominant position in the eastern half of the Empire was only too well-known. It was widely rumoured that Franz Ferdinand would not

flinch even at the risk of civil war in ending Magyar hegemony in Hungary, and indeed Seton-Watson was to maintain that the Heir-Apparent's plans for the reconstruction of the Empire eminently feasible.

"If Vienna has at last realised her Imperial mission, if her statesmen have the courage and ability to identify the movement for Croato-Serb unity with the requirements of Austrian patriotism, then the situation along the Adriatic and throughout the Western and Northern Balkans may undergo a speedy and beneficial change. By abandoning the old motto of 'Divide et Impera' and by directing into her own channels a movement which is already too formidable to be repressed, Austria will go far towards finding a solution for the complicated problems of nationality." (79)

Seton-Watson's faith in the Monarchy, although beset by doubts, was to remain basically intact right up to 1914 and even for a short time afterwards, in marked contrast to his friend Steed. It was the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in June 1914 and the Dual Monarchy's subsequent attack on Serbia which were to dash all his hopes and lead him, reluctantly, to the conclusion that the Rubicon had indeed been crossed and the Habsburgs had failed in their 'mission.' The die was finally cast against the Monarchy when Franz Joseph signed the fateful declaration of war against Serbia. (80)

While Seton-Watson approved the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, nevertheless, it was brought home to him, quite forcibly, just how dangerous the South Slav problem could be, not only for the Monarchy but for the peace of Europe. Since Serbian and Russian indignation knew no bounds, the danger of a general European war on this issue remained a real possibility. (81) At the height of the international crisis, which ensued as a result of the annexation, Seton-Watson's faith in the Monarchy received a blow from the underhand activities of the Austrian Foreign Minister Count Aehrenthal, who alarmed at the opposition to the annexation from even Britain and France, tried to prove in the Zagreb treason trial and the Friedjung libel action that the Croat-Serbian Coalition in Croatia was actively plotting against the Monarchy in conjunction with the Serbian government in Belgrade. However, Aehrenthal's attempts to gain both British and French support

sympathy for Austria and against Serbia backfired disastrously when it was soon proved that the whole case of the Imperial and Royal government rested on forged documents. In a letter to the Morning Post, Seton-Watson who had attended the proceedings in person, declared that "the whole trial (was) a travesty of justice, inspired and controlled by what to English ideas is a despotic government." (82) For the first time Seton-Watson began to seriously wonder about the Monarchy's claim to be an essential part of the European state system, remarking:

"The interests of international decency demand that theft, forgery, and espionage should cease to be the main pillars of foreign policy in a state that deserves the title of a Great Power." (83)

That Seton-Watson was profoundly influenced by the revelations of the Friedjung trial cannot be overestimated. As one professional historian to another, Seton-Watson regretted that Dr. Friedjung had allowed himself to be duped by Aehrenthal so easily and had not checked the veracity of the documents presented to him, which had induced him to write the original article in the Vienna Neue Freie Presse, accusing the Serb-Croat leaders of treason. Believing now that the entire Austrian Foreign Service was in fact infested with forgers and agents-provateurs, he wrote to George Seton on January 1st 1910: "The atmosphere of the whole trial was inexpressibly foul; but I have learnt lessons from it which will last all my life." (84)

And indeed he did. While he still wrote in a fairly optimistic spirit there was, nevertheless, a nagging doubt more and more in evidence which could not be completely allayed in his writings after 1908:

"There are certain things in the Austria of today, of which it is impossible to approve; but to the impartial observer new life and the desire for progress are everywhere apparent, and not merely this, but a steady growth in the conception of political and constitutional liberty and an increasing distaste for the old methods which still linger on in certain departments of life." (85)

The suspension of the Croatian constitution in 1912 only served to heighten Seton-Watson's doubts and fears and he responded by issuing another warning to the Habsburg rulers in his book 'Absolutism in Croatia' published in May of that year. (86)

A new period of Balkan, and indeed of international, politics

began with the outbreak on October 8th 1912 of the Balkan War, in which Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Greece jointly attacked Turkey with the aim of dividing her remaining European possessions. Seton-Watson was particularly impressed by the striking victories of the Serbian army, which succeeded in gaining not only considerable territory, but immense prestige amongst all South Slavs both within and outside the Monarchy for the Serbian kingdom.

Seton-Watson now began to feel that a 'Serbian' rather than an 'Austrian' solution to the South Slav problem might now very well be on the political agenda. A view reinforced by an important letter from his friend Dr. Iosip Smodlaka, a Croat deputy in the Dalmatian Diet and later of the Reichsrat in Vienna:

"But now we come to the obstacle which appears insurmountable. Are the interests of the Austro-Hungarian state compatible with the national aspirations of the Serbo-croats? It all depends on whether the Serbocroats adapt themselves to remaining a second-class nation or aspire to become a nation in the real sense of the word, that is completely free, absolute mistress of her own land and her own destinies. For the first case your plans are all that can be desired, for the second case they are too little. Until the Balkan War an adaptation to a modest ideal of autonomy, of the type proposed by you, appeared inevitable. Now things are not the same. Aspirations have become bigger." (87)

Seton-Watson now became increasingly aware that there was a much more serious conflict between his sympathy for the South Slavs and his desire to preserve the Monarchy than there was in the case of his championship of the Slovaks and Roumanians. He was reminded, too, of the words of Professor Kršnjavi who had told him that "Serbian and anti-Habsburg (are) notions which belong together" and that it was impossible "to speak like a follower of the Habsburgs and act like a Serb." (88)

Reluctant, however, to abandon his hopes of reconciling the two, Seton-Watson now rewrote his last two books in German under the titles 'Ungarische Wählen' (Corruption and Reform in Hungary) and 'Die Südslavische Frage' (The Southern Slav Question) in order to impress on the Austro-Hungarian authorities the urgency of meaningful reform and the lateness of the hour. The dedication in the latter book was accordingly quite different in tone from that in the original edition:

"The English edition of this book was dedicated to that Austrian statesman who shall have the genius and courage to solve the Southern Slav Question. At the twelfth hour

this dedication is repeated. 20 July 1911-20 April 1913." (89)

The warning was not altogether in vain since it created quite a stir in Viennese official circles and was even discussed by the Council of Ministers. (90)

In the preface to the work Seton-Watson was to offer some very prophetic words:

"The Balkan upheaval forces Austria-Hungary to hasten her easy-going pace and to work at full pressure, to make good the omissions of the past. The immediate future will prove whether Austria possesses the moral strength to solve the problem of Croato-Serb Unity and to force Hungary to a radical revision of its racial policy, or whether, false to her historical mission, she thinks of abdicating in favour of the Serbian, Bulgarian and Roumanian national states. This alternative specially concerns Germany, who might easily find herself in the position of paying the political debts of Austria." (91)

Once again one is struck by Seton-Watson's continuing belief in Austria's 'historical mission', and one is reminded of the words of one of Austria's greatest dramatists Franz Grillparzer in Seton-Watson's reference to Austria-Hungary's "easy-going pace": "It is the curse of our proud dynasty to move half-heartedly, stop half way and take half measures, Hesitatingly." (92)

Hoping that somehow that catastrophe could be avoided, Seton-Watson's hopes came to be increasingly focused on the person of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. In June 1913 Joseph Barenreither, a former Minister of Commerce and a reform-minded man who had taken Seton-Watson's warnings to heart noted:

"After his return from Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia (June 22nd) Seton-Watson told me (in Vienna) that the South Slavs are only waiting for one thing: the accession of the heir to the throne. Until then they see their condition as Babylonian captivity, which however they will endure until that time, dies certus, incertus quando. His judgments are sometimes one-sided, but he has many connections, and I have confidence in his judgment. He is a harsh opponent of the Magyars, but appears still to believe in a solution of the South Slav question under Austrian leadership." (93)

Seton-Watson's faith in the Archduke was reinforced by the favourable comments which he had heard about the Heir-Apparent from the leaders of the various nationalities in Hungary. He was particularly impressed by a report of a meeting between

Franz Ferdinand and the Slovak leaders Milan Hodža and Milan Ivanka. Franz Ferdinand had told the latter that he was appalled at their treatment by the Magyar nobility and that this was something he would not willingly tolerate. Told by Hodža that loyalty to the dynasty was rapidly crumbling as a result, the Heir-Apparent replied that he was "surprised that there should be any loyalty among the nationalities left after their treatment for many years past" (94) and he begged them to do what they could to keep alive what was left, until he was in a position to do something about it, - remarking à propos the Magyars: "It was an act of very bad taste of those gentlemen to come to Europe at all." (95)

The assassination of the Archduke and his wife on June 28th 1914, consequently, came as a shattering blow to Seton-Watson and his hopes for fundamental reforms in the Monarchy. He was at one with his Slovak friends, Hodža, Ivanka and Stodola, when they sent a wreath with the words: "To their lost hope, the deeply distressed Slovaks." (96) In shooting Franz Ferdinand Gavrilo Prinzip had killed the one man, in Seton-Watson's view, who could have helped the South Slav cause, and had brought disaster on their compatriots. At the end of July Seton-Watson wrote a flattering obituary of the Archduke which appeared in the August edition of the Contemporary Review. Entitled simply 'The Archduke Franz Ferdinand' the article still displayed hope that all was not completely lost and the new Heir-Apparent, the Archduke Karl would continue Franz Ferdinand's reform plans.

"The man may die, but the idea cannot die. The mission of the Habsburgs in Europe is more obvious than ever, and if the young Archduke be willing to take up his uncle's legacy, all men of every creed, race and party, at home or abroad, must stand by him and endeavour in their own way to help him prove his mettle. Hitherto he has given no indication of signal ability, but it is only now that his opportunity has come. He has an absolutely clean record, enjoys great popularity, and has a charming consort worthy of him. Nature has taught him to be 'suaviter in modo', the hard school of politics must now train him to be 'fortiter in re.' The task is one of immense difficulty, but it is an occasion to bring out all that is noblest in man, and from the bottom of our hearts we wish him the high resolve, the indomitable courage, the calm perseverance and willingness to learn which alone can bring success." (97)

However, the Austro-Hungarian government's response to the murder and the hate campaign against Serbia in the Viennese press, began to alarm him even more. By the end of July it was clear that the Monarchy was preparing for war with Serbia and thus threatening to drag all Europe into the conflict. As a consequence, a completely different note began to be sounded in his correspondence. As late as December 1912, (98) Seton-Watson was still voicing his customary suspicion of Serbia, but after the Second Balkan War in 1913 his attitude was noticeably different. In an article in the *Contemporary Review* in September 1913, entitled 'New Phases in the Balkan Question', Seton-Watson declared that the Peace of Bucharest marked "a political watershed" in the development of the Balkan peninsula. The allied Christian states had struck out on their own without reference to the Great Powers, first in the war against Turkey and then amongst themselves when Greece, Serbia, Roumania and Montenegro jointly defeated their former ally Bulgaria. While Seton-Watson was to remain critical of the Serbs' treatment of the Albanians, nevertheless, he felt that their stunning military victories against the Turks and Bulgarians displayed proof of "a material and spiritual resistance" which went a long way to eradicate their reputation for murder and intrigue, epitomized by the brutal killing of Alexander Obrenović and his wife in 1903. (99) Seton-Watson was struck by the remarkable change in Serbian attitudes since the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908. Indeed: "Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the braggadocio of 1908 and the silent heroism of the past year." (100)

In Seton-Watson's view this "material and spiritual renaissance" was intimately woven with the growth of Serbian and Croatian national feeling within the Monarchy, prompted by the continuing repressive policies pursued by the Magyar oligarchy in Budapest. Thus:

"While a year ago Austria was faced with the problem of how to retain the sympathies and loyalty of the Southern Slavs today she has to consider how it is possible to regain them." (101)

Unless- and here Seton-Watson's tone became more and more urgent- the subject nationalities of Hungary were rapidly

enfranchised and the Dual Monarchy reconstituted on some kind of tripartite basis then nothing could stop "Serbia from becoming the South Slav Piedmont." (I02) Serbia's Balkan victories had brought Hungary's treatment of its racial minorities to a head. Emboldened by the military prowess of their kith and kin across the frontier it was now abundantly clear that the Monarchy's South Slavs would not put up with their ill treatment much longer. Seton-Watson was also impressed by the new degree of co-operation shown between Serbia and Roumania in the war against Bulgaria. Ominously for the Monarchy Roumania, as well as Serbia, had kinsmen across the frontier in Hungary- in Transylvania. (I03)

While it is true that Seton-Watson's attitudes were changing as a result of the Balkan Wars and the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand it was the war that finally drove him to revolutionary solutions. In a letter to his friend May on August 6th 1914:

"The solutions I advocated for peace for years- South Slav, Hungarian- died a natural, or rather a most unnatural death at midnight before last. (The declaration of war against Germany.) From now on the Great Serbian State is inevitable and we must create it. I find Steed and Strachey are absolutely at one with me in this. You must not say much of what I write to you, but this much is clear: Dalmatia, Bosnia, Croatia, Istria must be united to Serbia....Roumania must have all her kinsmen." (I04)

When Franz Joseph signed the fateful declaration of war against Serbia on July 28th he had, ipso facto, declared that Habsburgs were incapable of fulfilling their historic mission and the solution to the South Slav Question had passed by default to Serbia- the South Slav Piedmont. Consequently, the solution to the question of Austria-Hungary was no longer amenable to one of half-measures in the traditional spirit of the Habsburgs (après Grillparzer) but only the most radical and the most revolutionary would ultimately suffice. It was fortunate indeed for Seton-Watson that these radical measures were bound up with the interests of his own country in the great war against Germany. (I05)

Seton-Watson's attitude towards Austria-Hungary was now very much coloured by the grim struggle Britain was now waging

against the German Empire. In a letter to the Spectator on August 15th 1914 Seton-Watson was quite candid in saying that he was now opposing the Monarchy because she was Germany's chief ally and, hence, more out of sorrow than anger. While Britain had no "direct quarrel with the Dual Monarchy" it was self-evident that "the open ally of our chief enemy cannot remain our friend." (I06) Consequently Seton-Watson expressed the hope that an Allied victory would ensure that:

"the Southern Slav question, that open sore upon the face of Europe, shall be dealt with in a final form as possible, and in accordance with the wishes of the Serbo-Croat race." (I07)

A few days later on August 20th he emphasized once again that since the Habsburgs had failed to solve this question it was up to others to do so. (I08)

Seton-Watson's recently found enthusiasm for Serbia was now buttressed by close personal contact with various South Slav politicians such as the Croat politician Frano Supilo, who arrived in London from Switzerland in September 1914. Other contacts were Ante Trumbić, Ivan Meštrović and Hinko Hinković. As Croats and Slovenes these men impressed on Seton-Watson that they had no desire to exchange Austrian and Hungarian rule for a Greater Serbia but wanted a genuine Yugoslav state in which all the South Slavonic peoples would be equally represented.

September also saw Seton-Watson's first close contacts with the Czech leader Thomas Masaryk through his emissary Emmanuel Voska, and then in October Seton-Watson was to meet the future President of an independent Czechoslovakia in Rotterdam. These two days in Rotterdam were extremely important in Seton-Watson's life since Masaryk convinced him of the need for Bohemian independence. If, at the beginning of the war, Seton-Watson had come to the conclusion that Austria would have to surrender its South Slav, Roumanian and Polish provinces, yet a reduced Monarchy might still survive and have a role to play in the political life of Europe. However, if Bohemia were to become an independent state than nothing would be left but the German-speaking provinces and a residual Hungary deprived of all its peripheral provinces, including Slovakia. Given the well-known hostility between Vienna and Budapest it was fairly

certain that if each were to lose so much territory the very *raison d'être* for their alliance would have disappeared. The formation of a state of Czech and Slovaks must therefore mean the complete dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy and indeed this is the conclusion set down in 'The War and Democracy', published in December 1914. Written in conjunction with his friends Alfred Zimmermann, J. Dover Wilson, Lord Eustace Perry and Arthur Greenwood, Seton-Watson finally rejected all plans for the reorganisation of the Empire. What would have been an ideal solution in peace time could no longer be countenanced now that war had placed an insuperable barrier of blood between the Germanic, Magyar and Slavonic races. (109) Franz Ferdinand's assassination had effectively put an end to the chief prospects of peaceful reform and now the subject nationalities of Hungary, in particular, could only hope for liberation from the Allied Powers and their co-nationals abroad. (110) One of the most powerful organisations working for the cause of the South Slavs and the dissolution of the Monarchy was the Serbian Relief Fund founded by Seton-Watson, Arthur Evans and Bertram Christian on September 23rd 1914. Although its main task was the organisation and financing of hospital units in Serbia, propaganda became an important by-product and its policy faithfully followed the line laid down in 'The War and Democracy', and the ideas elaborated by Seton-Watson in another important pamphlet, published in early 1915, entitled 'What is at Stake in the War'. (111) In this latter pamphlet Seton-Watson declared quite unequivocally that the victory of Britain, France and Russia would of necessity mean the end of both the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Empire since only then could Germany be frustrated in its imperialist ambitions in the Near and Middle East. At the end of 1916 Seton-Watson was to be the principal founder and financier of a weekly magazine entitled 'New Europe', which made the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy its aim par excellence (112), but already the ideas in it were presaged in this pamphlet; indeed its leitmotif was apparent in the telling phrase "the new Europe of our dreams." (113)

"The great war is a hideous proof that the policy of racial dominance and forcible assimilation is morally

bankrupt, but through its long-drawn-out horrors we believe that more than one dream of national unity and liberation will be realised, and that those racial minorities whose separate existence reasons of geography and economics render impossible, will attain guarantees of full linguistic and cultural liberty." (II4)

Both Steed and Seton-Watson had, thus, come to believe in a fundamental reorganisation of East-Central Europe. Since a democratic and liberal restructuring of the Monarchy on trialist or federal lines had ultimately proved impossible, the future could only lie in the creation of new states based upon the principle of nationality. What could not be done within the Empire would have to be done without it and indeed over its defunct body. This, it was hoped, would lead to a real 'League of Nations', such as the American President Woodrow Wilson was later to advocate. Like his friend Steed Seton-Watson came to share his enthusiasm and optimism for the small Slavonic peoples of Europe but he moved one step further. Over and beyond the present conflict with the Central Powers lay the fundamental problem of the great chasm between the Byzantine and Slavonic east represented by Russia and the Latin and Catholic/Protestant west. To bridge this chasm and "to bring Russia into Europe" now became of increasing interest and concern to Seton-Watson. Again like Steed, Seton-Watson had been a resolute opponent of Russian designs in Eastern Europe, particularly in the Balkans, but now he argued that things had changed dramatically- the old alliance between the three conservative monarchies of the East had broken up and Russia now stood at the side of democratic Britain and France. In a series of lectures given at the University of London and later published under the title 'German, Slav and Magyar-a Study in The Origins of The Great War', Seton-Watson argued:

"The Polish partition is the great initial crime which lies at the root of all European troubles for a hundred and fifty years past, and which has committed the three spoilers (Germany, Austria and Russia) to the support of an evil situation. Now that Russia has broken with Germany, and is very slowly but noticeably preparing to atone for the crimes of the past, we have the right to expect a complete transformation of Russo-Polish relations and consequently of the whole situation between the Baltic and the Danube." (II5)

The fact that Russian conservatives like the Minister of the Interior Dimitri Maklakov had roundly condemned the alliance with Britain and France in his famous Memorandum but found themselves unable to prevent it, was proof that progressive forces had indeed gained the upper hand in even this former bastion of reaction. Naturally, for Seton-Watson the ultimate overthrow of Tsarism in 1917 and its replacement by an ostensibly liberal and democratic government was further proof that the 'Zeitgeist' of progress could not be halted let alone reversed.

Seton-Watson went on to conclude:

"The twentieth century is the century of the Slav, and it is one of the main tasks of the war to emancipate the hitherto despised, unknown, or forgotten Slavonic democracies of Central and Southern Europe. If the Poles, the Czechoslovaks, and the Jugoslavs succeed in reasserting their right to independent national development, and to that close and cordial intercourse with the West to which they have always aspired, they will become so many links between the West and their Russian kinsmen, and will restore to Europe that idealism which Prussian materialist doctrine was rapidly crushing out." (II6)

Certainly then, the need to defeat Imperial Germany, the enemy par excellence, had led to a complete reappraisal of the Slav world in general. Before the war Seton-Watson had scarcely concealed his distaste for the barbarism of some of the Slavonic peoples, particularly the Serbs, but the Magyars treatment of their subject Slavs had made him far more sympathetic to their cause. The Slovaks, especially, had made a great impression on him and their cultural and general artistic endeavours had convinced him of the validity of Ruskin's motto that 'true art is of the people.' (II7) Although there was undoubtedly a degree of wishful thinking in his new Weltanschauung and not a little zealotry of the newly converted, Seton-Watson had evidently come to believe that the majority of the slavonic peoples both within and outside the Monarchy wished the Entente Powers well and hence merited serious consideration in return. In fact he performed a veritable volte face in now arguing that those who accused the Serbs and other Balkan peoples of 'savagery' would do well to

remember that it was only thanks to these so-called 'savage nations' that the West had been able to develop its civilization. The emphasis was, thus, no longer on the 'historic mission' of the Habsburgs as the defenders of 'Western Civilization' but on the sacrifices made by the small Slav peoples of the Balkans and Central Europe against Ottomans, Magyars and Germans alike, that made this civilization possible. In this struggle, Seton-Watson, now reasoned, there could be no doubt that pride of place must be given to the Serbs that he had previously disparaged-for: "The Jugoslavs are the guardians of the gate through which the east breaks through to the west and vice versa." (118) It was this latter scenario, of course, of the west breaking through to the east, that particularly concerned Seton-Watson of Imperial Germany striking out via her Austro-Hungarian ally to the Middle East and beyond.

If the smaller Slav peoples of central and south-eastern Europe were freed from the domination of the Germans and Magyars, then this alone would have made all the sacrifices of the war worthwhile. The *arrière pensée*, naturally being that these peoples would then act as a barrier against any further 'Drang nach Osten' on Germany's part. Without this implicit consideration, however, it is doubtful if many others in the Union of Democratic Control, for example, would have gone along with Seton-Watson's prognosis. (119)

Moreover, Seton-Watson, went on to argue, these Slavonic peoples were essential to act as mediators between the great Slav empire of the East and the latin civilization of the West. Still focused on the idea of 'historic missions' Seton-Watson now argued that this was theirs. In a letter to The Times in April 1915 he roundly declared:

"The Southern Slavs, and it should be added the Bohemians are our natural allies, as the intermediaries between Britain and Russia, between Britain and the great Slavonic world of thought and politics which is at last slowly coming more nearly into our ken. If we abandon them we deliberately turn our back upon the future and renounce the principles of justice, liberty, and nationality in favour of those motives of racial dominance and strategic 'grab' which inspire the German and Magyar authors of this war." (120)

In Seton-Watson's view, the Bohemians (Czechs) in particular, were admirably placed to act as 'intermediaries' since they possessed a similar intellectual and religious tradition to that of Scotland and England. As a result they could legitimately present Western ideas in a slavonic form acceptable to the Russians while expounding Russian thinking in a way in which British and French statesmen and public could understand. (121) Not only did Seton-Watson ascribe this important task of 'acting as a bridge' between two major European civilizations to the Czechs, he also declared:

"The nation which was the first in Europe to vindicate the principle of religious liberty has a great part to play in the task which lies before the Allies today- the vindication of political liberty for all the nations of Europe." (122)

A considerable compliment: evidently, Seton-Watson saw the Czechs not only as a 'beacon of light' for the subject nationalities of Austria-Hungary but also as a shining example to Russia- Britain and France's principal ally against the Central Powers.

This hoped for rapprochement and entente between Russia and the West was to be- thanks to the Czechs- not just an intellectual and cultural exercise but the beginnings of a lasting political alliance. Just as the war had forced Russia to choose between progress and reaction and between liberty and oppression, so Britain had to choose between Slavdom and the Germanic world. In the modern world the much vaunted policy of 'Splendid Isolation' was no longer a feasible option. Indeed, it was not too much to say that the fate of not only Europe, but the world- particularly that large part of it encompassed by the British Empire- was ultimately dependent upon forging a lasting relationship with the great Slav colossus in the East. (123)

CHAPTER III

ANGLO-AUSTRIAN RELATIONS (1880-1908)

(1880-1898)

In 1880 the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister unearthed a proposal first made by his predecessor, Count Julius Andrassy. Count Heinrich von Haymerle's suggestion was nothing less than that Britain should be formally invited to join the Dual Alliance forged between Andrassy and the German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, the year before. The aim was quite simply to gain Britain's official support for any move Austria-Hungary might need to take to oppose Russia's ambitions in the Balkans- an area of supreme strategic importance for the Monarchy given her geographical situation. In a letter to Count Kálnoky, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador designate to Russia, Haymerle instructed him to discuss the matter with Bismarck, emphasizing that both the Monarchy and Britain had a mutual interest in preventing Russia from seizing the Straits and Constantinople, and thus gaining direct entrance to the Mediterranean. As far as the Monarchy was concerned, Haymerle wrote on February 7th 1880, "Russia is our arch-enemy, while Italy is only of secondary importance." (1) The Foreign Minister went on to add that since Bismarck had agreed the previous autumn that Britain should be made aware of the *raison d'être* for the Dual Alliance in the first place, the suggestion could hardly come as a great surprise. Kálnoky was instructed to ask the German Chancellor the following question:

"Whether, and to what extent we should further enlighten Beaconsfield and Salisbury (Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary) in order to obtain promises of declarations pledging England, in case of conflict with Russia or as an indirect collision with her which might threaten our position in the Orient, to use her influence, her direct pressure, or, should occasion arise, a naval demonstration to prevent Italy from attacking us and to safeguard the Adriatic for us." (2)

If Russia were indeed the *bête noire* par excellence, then Italy was undoubtedly "a secondary consideration" of some importance since the Monarchy had lost first Lombardy to her in 1859 and then Venetia in 1866. Then again Italian Nationalists were vociferous in their claims to Trieste, Gorizia, Istria and the South Tyrol- the so-called 'Italia Irredenta.' (Figs. 1&2) Haymerle was well aware of the practical difficulties in forging an alliance with England since her refusal to contemplate

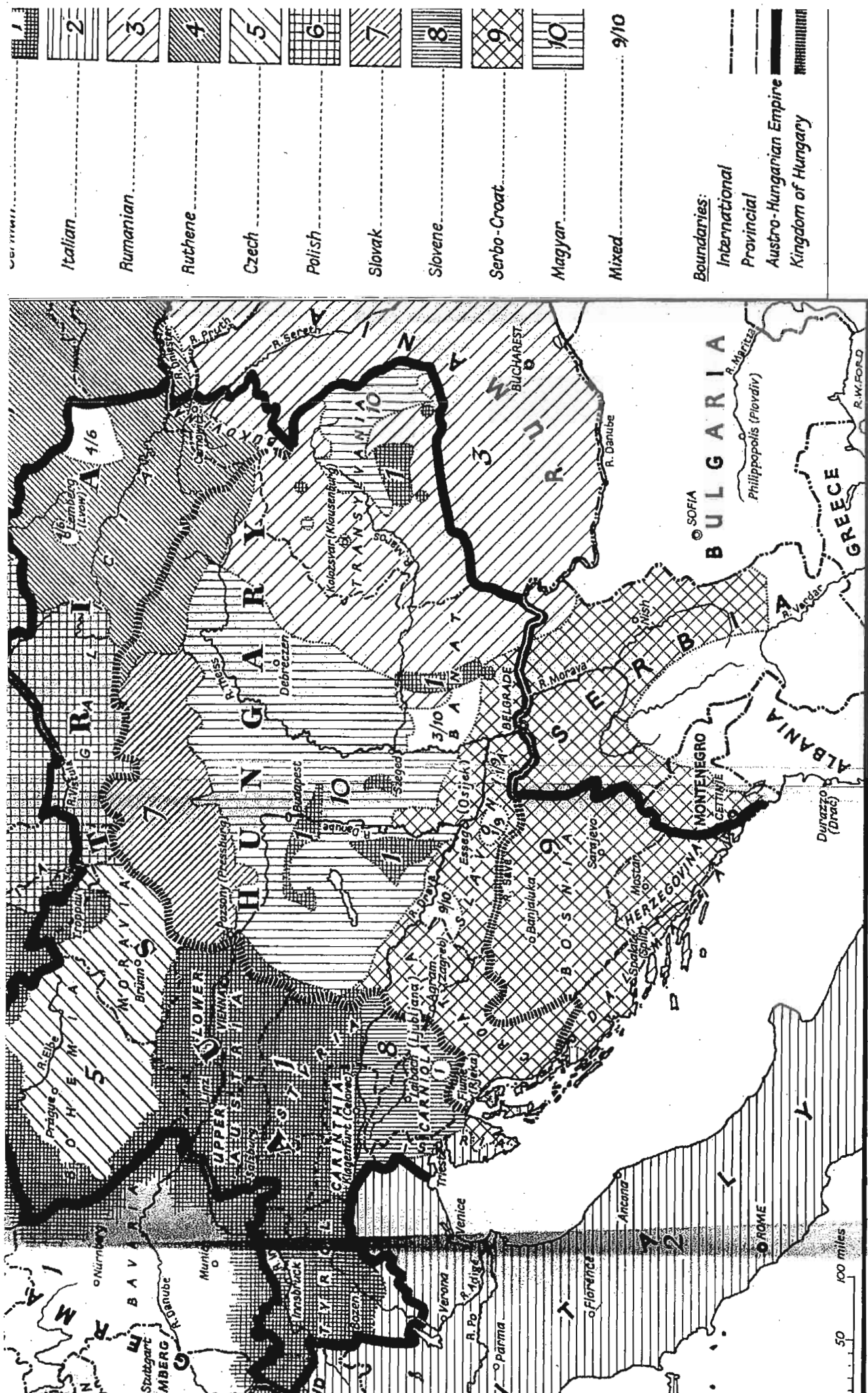
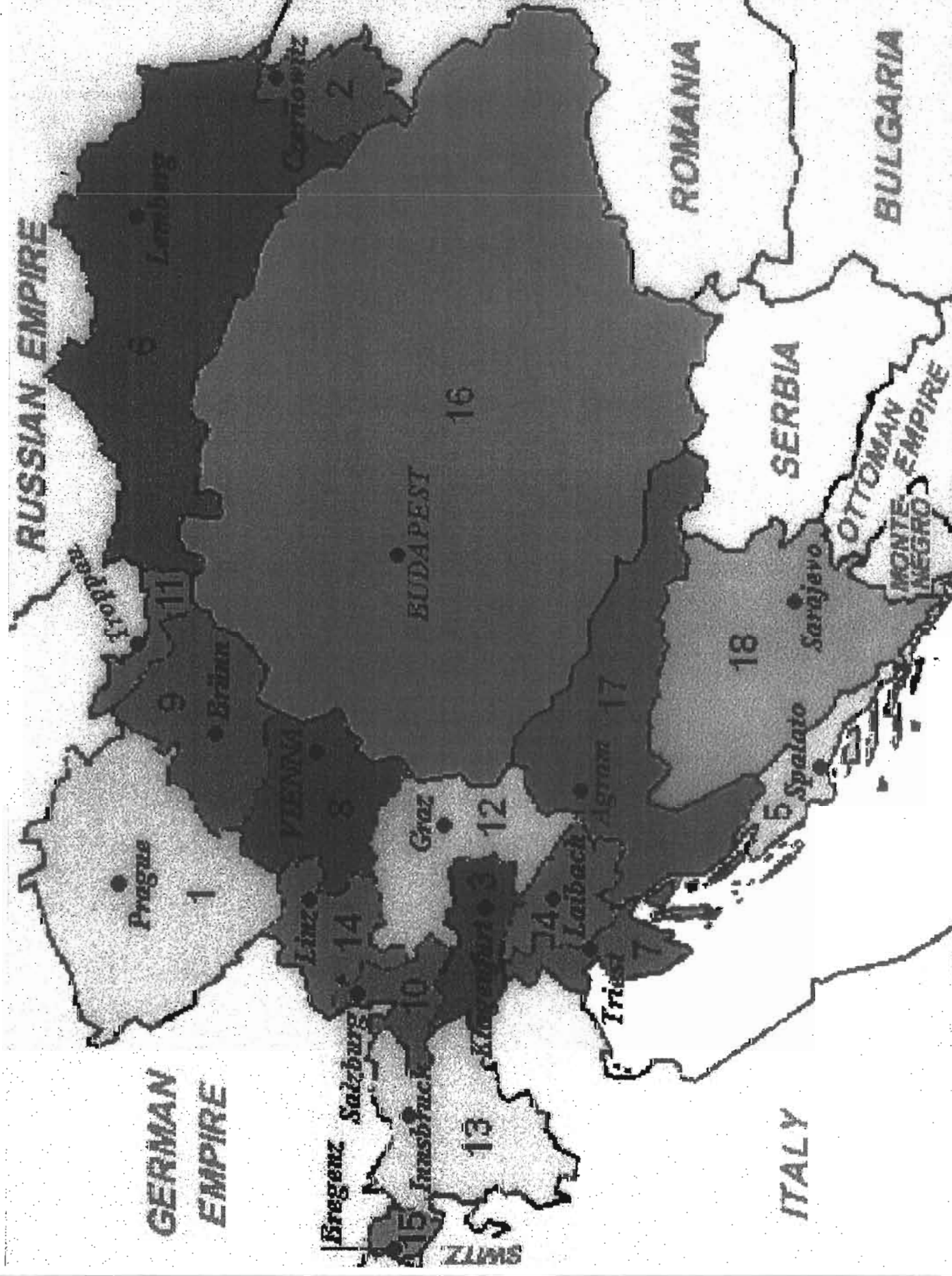


FIGURE 1

FIGURE I

CISLEITHA

1. Bohemia
 2. Bukovina
 3. Carinthia
 4. Carniola
 5. Dalmatia
 6. Galicia
 7. Kustental
 8. Lower Austria
 9. Moravia
 10. Salzburg
 11. Silesia
 12. Styria
 13. Tirol
 14. Upper Austria
 15. Vorarlberg
- TRANSLEITHA
16. Hungary
 17. Croatia and Slavonia
 18. BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA



formal agreements with specific commitments was proverbial. In this case, however, the commitment would be minimal while Britain would gain great political advantages. All that the Monarchy would require from Britain would be a promise to protect Austria-Hungary from any possible *Dochstoß* on the part of Italy if war should break out with Russia. A quiet word in Italy's ear would be sufficient since the country's long exposed coastline was particularly vulnerable to attack from a maritime power like Britain. Haymerle was also aware that securing Bismarck's consent to any overtly anti-Russian move was highly problematical given the traditional warm friendship between Prussia and Russia and the Hohenzollern and Romanov dynasties. After all, Bismarck could scarcely forget that it was thanks to Russian forbearance and neutrality, that Prussia had been able to defeat Austria in 1866 for the leadership of Germany. As a result Haymerle said he was willing to accept "Britain's support 'pro domo nostro' in general terms" without any outward anti-Russian bias, if Germany would agree. (3)

Much to Haymerle's chagrin even this comparatively innocuous suggestion met with the German Chancellor's categorical rejection. As far as Bismarck was concerned the help of Britain was neither necessary nor desirable. In any case, Bismarck reasoned, were Haymerle's worst fears realised and war with Russia ensued, then Britain would of her own accord and in her own interest restrain Italy. Britain would scarcely need to be prompted by the Central Powers. Bismarck was to confide that this was not just shrewd reasoning on his part, but certain fact, since he had been party to a conversation between Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield) and Cairoli, the Italian Prime Minister, in August 1879. Cairoli had asked Disraeli how Britain would react to an alliance between Italy and Russia, and Disraeli had replied "with the impudence that he alone possessed" that "H.M. Government would regard such an act as a *casus belli*." As far as Bismarck was concerned this was clear proof that "Britain was arrogant enough already" without being "proffered further securities." (4) Haymerle may have been disappointed but he could scarcely have been surprised since

Bismarck's principal concern at this time was not to antagonize Russia unnecessarily with the prospect of a coalition against her, however veiled this might be. To do this would in fact undermine those elements in the Russian government who did want an equitable *modus vivendi* with Austria-Hungary in the Balkans. Indeed the Central Powers might very well be shooting themselves in the foot. For Bismarck the ideal position internationally was a harmonious relationship between all three conservative monarchies- the *DreiKaiserBund*.

The German Chancellor's icy response effectively scuttled Haymerle's hopes of an alliance with Britain against Italy but all was not lost. The opening of negotiations between the Monarchy and Russia during the course of 1880 made the likelihood of war between the two countries remote and thus the need for such an alliance was no longer of pressing importance. As it happened, Austria-Hungary had little to fear from Italy since the kingdom was bedevilled by a host of internal problems which seriously circumscribed any attempt to wage war effectively. Internationally, too, Italy's position was weak. In 1881 France proceeded to occupy Tunis, long desired by Italian nationalists and Italy desperately needed to come to some kind of entente with Austria-Hungary- and by extension the Monarchy's ally, Germany. The situation was actually so serious that it was not inconceivable that the House of Savoy, which had united Italy in 1860-61, might be overthrown. In fact, Sonnino, who, ironically was to shatter the Triple alliance some thirty years later, roundly declared that Italy had no option but to seek the friendship of both the Dual Alliance and Britain as the only effective counterweights to French ambitions in the Mediterranean. The occupation of Tunis by France was a direct threat to Italian security since it was the closest point to the kingdom on the North African littoral. Indeed, in France's hands Tunisia was nothing less than "a dagger pointed at Sicily."

"No conflict of interest separates us from Germany while many common interests unite us; primarily the preservation of peace and the curbing of France's lust for power. As soon as we have removed the cause of the

distrust existing towards us in Austria, the accomplishment of an alliance with Germany will meet with no obstacle. Our diplomacy must accordingly remove every suspicion that our policy might be disadvantageous to the former power, in order to win us her friendship...Austria's friendship is a prerequisite to our successful political effort. Isolation means annihilation." (5)

As a result, on May 20th 1882, Italy joined Austria-Hungary and Germany and the Dual Alliance was transformed into the Triple Alliance- the second major international treaty of this time. (6) A supplementary Protocol to the treaty specifically stated that the Triple Alliance was in no way directed against Britain but concerned solely with the dangers that were believed to emanate from Russia and France. The original Italian draft of the treaty had in fact expressed the hope that Britain might yet be induced to join the alliance; failing this, however, given Britain's traditional antipathy to formal commitments, a pact of neutrality would be an acceptable substitute. For, as Crispi, the Italian Premier put it:

"As a friend and ally of England we have nothing to fear at sea; if the opposite were the case we should never be masters of our sea-coasts." (7)

While Kálmoky, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister welcomed the idea, Bismarck was decidedly hostile for the same reasons adduced before. Russia must on no account be alienated and antagonized, especially as there was still the possibility of coming to an agreement with her. Moreover, Bismarck was becoming increasingly concerned that Britain was pursuing an expansionist policy in Asia which might very well lead to war with Russia. Finally, of course, there was the not insignificant factor of constitutional propriety to be considered. Every British government was obliged to consult parliament before any alliance could be concluded and Bismarck knew full well that British parliaments could prove recalcitrant and had the power to reject as well as ratify. Thus, any alliance with Britain ran the risk of exposing the entire Triple Alliance in *minitiae* to the unwelcome light of day, with unpredictable and potentially dangerous responses on the part of Russia.

In theory, at least, Italy's adhesion to the cause of

the Central Powers offered Austria-Hungary a certain degree of protection on her southern flank but as Bismarck wryly observed, "One perhaps could not have too much trust on that score." (8)

The winter of 1885-6 saw a serious deterioration in the relations between Greece and Turkey. Never cordial at the best of times, border and trade disputes now threatened to degenerate into open war. After the Bulgarian crisis some months earlier the last thing either Britain or Austria-Hungary wanted was a new threat to peace and stability in the Balkans and so when Britain demanded the Greeks demobilize their army in January 1886 and the Greeks refused, Britain set out to organize a naval demonstration in Greek waters in which the Monarchy was invited to participate, along with the other Great Powers. Four months later, in May, the fleets of Britain and Austria-Hungary, supported by those of Italy, Germany and Russia, worked in close conjunction to each blockade a certain section of the Greek coast, which forced the new Greek government in June to accede to Britain's demand. The Greeks having demobilized, the fleets were withdrawn, although the last Habsburg vessel did not actually leave Greek waters until August. The close co-operation between Britain and the Monarchy was a noticeable demonstration of the warm relations existing between the two powers even though it cost Austria-Hungary considerable expense which it could well have done without. Indeed, the Monarchy's Marinekommandant complained that the entire operation had seriously depleted his budget- or as he graphically put it: "The (expletive deleted) Greeks are costing me more money than they are worth." (9) However, this notwithstanding, the operation did demonstrate to Great Britain the usefulness of co-operation with Austria-Hungary and Italy in the eastern Mediterranean, as well as enhancing the Monarchy's own diplomatic 'punch' outside the Balkans proper.

In the summer of 1886 the Liberal government fell and was replaced by the Conservatives under Lord Salisbury, who were traditionally more pro-Habsburg. Salisbury was in fact particularly anxious for Austro-Hungarian support since he was becoming increasingly concerned at the growth of Russian

influence in both the Balkans and the Near East which had the potential to threaten British communications with Egypt and India. An additional factor in Salisbury's calculations was the colonial rivalry with France, especially with the advent to power of Aube as Navy Minister and General Georges Boulanger as Minister of War, a man well-known for his bellicose pronouncements. As a result with the agreement and indeed encouragement of Bismarck- the German Chancellor's former hostility notwithstanding- Salisbury was able to conclude the first of what came to be called the Mediterranean Agreements with Italy on February 12th 1887. The specific purpose of the agreement was declared to be the maintenance of the status quo in the Mediterranean. A month later, on March 24th, Salisbury came to a similar agreement with the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, which also included a reference to the Aegean and Black Seas. More detailed Notes between Britain, Italy and Austria-Hungary followed on December 12th 1886, committing all three powers to defend the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire from any predatory designs that Russia might have. Moreover, if by chance, the Sultan himself should succumb to Russian pressure then all three states would exercise their right "either jointly or seperately" to intervene "to preserve Ottoman territorial integrity and uphold existing treaties." (10) In other words the Porte was to be saved, if necessary, malgré lui.

Five months later, in May 1888, all three powers staged a display of public solidarity at the opening of the Barcelona World Fair. The British, Italian and Austro-Hungarian naval squadrons were received by the Spanish government with great warmth. The Spanish were particularly impressed by Austria-Hungary's five armoured cruisers- the Custoza, Kaiser Max, Prinz Eugen, Leopold and Tregetthof- the biggest squadron to have ventured out of the Adriatic. En route home there was to be a further display of friendship between Austria-Hungary and Britain when the Rear-Admiral Manfroni paid a courtesy call on the British governor in Malta.

During the first six months of 1889 the Italian Prime Minister, Crispi, tried, unsuccessfully as it happened, to

secure more specific commitments from Germany and Austria-Hungary against French ambitions in the Mediterranean, particularly North Africa. Kálmoky, the Monarchy's Foreign Minister, however, had no intention of embroiling the Empire in war with France, reasoning (correctly) that Austria-Hungary had no cause to fear any French moves in the Adriatic all the while Britain stood by the Mediterranean Agreements and was, thus, in effect allied with the Triple Alliance.

As far as Kálmoky was concerned both the Triple Alliance and the Mediterranean Agreements served the same purpose as insurance policies against any threatening moves by Russia. The agreement with Britain was particularly important since Britain's commitment to defend the status quo in the Mediterranean was an implicit commitment to defend the Dardenelles, the gateway to the Mediterranean, from any Russian attack.

In the summer of 1891 Lord Salisbury powerfully demonstrated his support for the Mediterranean Agreements by despatching a naval squadron to both Italy and Austria-Hungary. As Lord Palmerston was wont to say if you wished to make a useful point vis-à-vis the chancellories of Europe then there was no finer way than by sending the fleet- hence his sobriquet 'gun-boat.' The squadron went first to Venice where it was reviewed by the Italian king Umberto himself. After this the flagship Victoria continued on to Fiume, the main port of Hungary, where the Emperor Franz Joseph took the salute as well as the Marinekommandant. A singular honour, for the Emperor being a military man, had never shown any particular interest in navies. This visit was, in fact, the first major one by a British vessel to a Habsburg port in a decade. (11) It was Kálmoky's misfortune that the fall of Salisbury's government the following year dramatically altered the situation since although his successor, Gladstone, could see the advantage of maintaining the agreement with Italy, he had no intention of pursuing a policy which could lead to conflict with Russia for the sake of the Monarchy's Balkan interests. Consequently with Gladstone and the Liberals in office the Agreements seemed in considerable doubt. (12)

After 1890 there were in fact major changes in the entire

international situation. Caprivi, Bismarck's successor as German Chancellor, allowed Germany's Reinsurance Treaty with Russia to lapse since he considered it quite incompatible with the Reich's obligations to Austria-Hungary. This proved to be a fatal move since it led to a rapprochement between Russia and France. From the Monarchy's point of view the lapsing of the treaty in 1889 and the totally unexpected alliance between these two states had the potential to drive Britain closer to the Triple Alliance since Britain had quarrels with both Russia and France in Asia and Africa respectively.

In 1893 a Russian naval squadron visited the French Mediterranean port of Toulon, returning the courtesy visit of a French squadron to Kronstadt two years before. The visit, however, was but the preamble to a formal alliance which sent not only shock-waves through the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin but the British Foreign Office in London too. A diplomatic volte face of seemingly inconceivable proportions had taken place: France the harbinger of revolution in alliance with autocratic Russia, the *bête noire* of republicans and radicals everywhere. From Kálmány's point of view, the dark cloud had a silver lining. Were the Mediterranean Agreements to lapse completely then - or so the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister reasoned- even a government headed by Gladstone would have to defend British interests such as Egypt and the Suez Canal which any move by Russia on Constantinople would endanger. Nolens, volens, anti-imperialist as he was Gladstone would have no choice but to act. Thus, Austria-Hungary would still have a large measure of security even without a formal alliance or commitment from Britain.

However, during the course of 1893, when Austria-Hungary and Italy jointly raised the question of renewing the Mediterranean Agreements, Lord Roseberry, the Foreign Secretary proved to be a more sympathetic figure than the aged Prime Minister, Gladstone, saying:

"It was generally recognized both in the Liberal and the Conservative Party that England's interests in the Balkan peninsula were identical with those of Austria-

Hungary, and that outside there was no question on which the interests of the two States were divergent." (13)

Consequently, the British ambassador in Vienna was instructed by Rosebery in May 1893 to inform the Habsburg government that, as far as he was personally concerned, the Monarchy was "England's natural ally" (14) but he had to take cognizance of his Prime Minister's views. Consequently, he:

"could not feel himself therefore compelled, in spite of all the identity of views existing between Count Kálnoky and him, to confirm this identity of views by the exchange of Notes." (15)

While there is little doubt that the despatch of a British naval squadron to the Italian port of Spezia could be considered as a visible demonstration of support for the Triple Alliance and a 'shot across the bows of Russia and France',

Rosebery continually refused to enter into any closer relationship. Thus, Rosebery declined the Austro-Hungarian ambassador Count Deym's request in late December 1893 that he set before the British Cabinet a proposal that Britain make a definite declaration that she would resist any Russian attack on Constantinople. "Ce que vous me demandez", he replied, "il m'est impossible de la faire et ce n'est pas dans notre intérêt que je le fasse." (16)

The British Cabinet, Rosebery pointed out, would unquestionably refuse "to form binding resolutions today for an eventuality that is still far distant." (17) Deym was particularly disconcerted when the Foreign Secretary went on to say that while "England could defend the Straits alone against Russia" (18) the support of the Triple Alliance in holding in check Russia's ally, France would be most welcome. In other words while refusing to make a positive commitment to Austria-Hungary, Britain was expecting the Triple Alliance to defend her from any move by the French- a rather one-sided agreement which no Austro-Hungarian or German government could possibly accept.

Rosebery's replacement at the Foreign Office by Lord Kimberley implied no change in the British attitude towards the Monarchy. He too refused to propose to the Cabinet that Britain should make a formal declaration that any attack on the

Ottoman capital by Russia would be an effective *casus belli*. Like his predecessor, Kimberley said, all he could do was to offer the Habsburg government Britain's verbal assurance that Britain would know how to defend the common interests of both powers at the Straits, if and when the occasion should arise. More than this he could not say or would say.

By May of the following year Kálnoky had been replaced by the Polish aristocrat, Count Agenor Goluchowski, who, like many of his countrymen, was markedly hostile to Russia. As a consequence Goluchowski had an even stronger interest in strengthening ties with Britain and the return to power of Lord Salisbury in 1895 led him to believe there was a good chance of breathing new life into the Mediterranean Agreements. In this Goluchowski was to be rudely disappointed, for Salisbury was to tell him, that it was not possible from a practical point of view for Britain to adopt a more robust policy vis-à-vis Russia. Matters too were complicated by the international situation. Germany's enthusiastic support for the Boers in their quarrel with Britain was bound to affect, negatively, Britain's relationship with Austria-Hungary, Germany's chief ally. The souring of relations was reflected in the winter of 1895-6 when the Austrian naval attaché in London, Capitan Ladislau Sztranyavsky, complained of increasing difficulty in gaining information from the British Admiralty. When the matter was raised with Lord Salisbury, the latter hastened to assure him that there was no change in the official policy of the British government towards the Monarchy but when the Austrian military attaché complained that he, too, was having similar problems, then, it was clear, that a change had taken place. There was little doubt that both the British naval and military authorities were apprehensive that any information, whether sensitive or not, would be passed automatically to her German ally.

In spite of the practical problems of Anglo-Austrian co-operation in the Near East and the clouding of the international situation as a result of friction with Germany, joint endeavour was still on the agenda in the latter half of the 1890's. The problem was, however, that Goluchowsky and

Salisbury were essentially working at cross purposes, pursuing different aims. Salisbury's main concern now was to forge an international coalition against Ottoman Turkey on behalf of the oppressed Armenian population of the Empire, while Goluchowski was anxious to forestall what he believed might be a plan for Britain and Russia to bury their differences and eventually partition the 'Sick Man of Europe' between them. Such an occurrence could only have the direst consequences for the Monarchy. (19)

There was no denying that the massacres in Armenia and the revolt of the Cretan Christians against increasing misrule had led to a fundamental reappraisal of British policy in the Near East. Concern for the Straits and Constantinople was no longer the Leitmotiv of the British government. This remarkable volte face was not taken lightly, as Salisbury confided to the First Lord of the Admiralty in December 1895, but circumstances had changed dramatically and Britain could not afford to ignore what was happening in Armenia and Crete:

"I am not at all a bigot to the policy of keeping Russia out of Constantinople. On the contrary I think that the English statesmen who brought on the Crimean War made a mistake. But the keeping of Constantinople out of Russian hands has now for near half a century, if not more, been proclaimed a vital article of one political creed; it has been attested to by all statesmen of all parties, at home and in the east; our fate and our prestige are tied up with it; that when it falls the blow will be tremendous." (20)

The Austro-Hungarian government's anxiety had, however, now reached such a fever pitch that it needed nothing less than an unequivocal and categorical declaration from Britain that she would defend Constantinople and the Straits with all the means at her disposal. Consequently, it was Goluchowski and not Salisbury and the British government that refused to renew the Mediterranean Agreements with their much looser arrangements. Throughout 1896 Salisbury tried to reach an agreement with the Monarchy but without making the commitment that the Habsburg authorities wanted. Goluchowski still hoped that he might yet be able to change Salisbury's mind, reminding him in January 1897 that it was not Austria-Hungary that stood in the front line of the defence of the Straits, as he seemed

to think, but Britain with her overwhelming naval supremacy. Only Britain had this capacity as Lord Rosebery had candidly admitted when he told Count Deym that England could protect the Ottoman capital "alone" three years before.(21) Once again, Goluchowski pressed Salisbury for a definite commitment, saying that, naturally, the Monarchy would do all in its power to assist- the British should have no doubts on that score- but the Monarchy must have a binding assurance first. The Habsburg Empire could not possibly risk any confrontation with Russia otherwise, especially as Austria-Hungary had serious doubts about receiving any effective help from her ally, Germany. It was, after all, common knowledge that the Kaiser would be extremely reluctant to damage the traditional friendly ties between Hohenzollern and Romanov. Again, Salisbury repeated the sentiments of Rosebery ("England's natural ally"), adding that Britain continued to regard Austria Hungary as "her only friend in Europe." (22) But further than this he could not go, since the British public would scarcely tolerate any projected attack on Russia after the massacres in Armenia. Moral and ethical considerations apart there were still huge practical problems involved. Unlike 10 years previously, Russia's relations with Bulgaria were good as the public display of reconciliation between the two countries in February 1896 had amply demonstrated and Bulgaria's proximity to Constantinople immensely strengthened Russia's hand in any move she might make on the Ottoman capital. Further gloom was provided by a damning report on the strategic aspects of the Straits Question carried out by the British Foreign Office in January 1897 which completely contradicted the seemingly 'complacent' stance of Lord Rosebery. Far from being able to counter Russia "alone", the overwhelming military and naval advantages that Russia enjoyed in the region thanks to her present friendship with Bulgaria, actually made it virtually impossible for Britain to stop her, if she were really determined upon seizing the Straits. Moreover, while the Turks had fortified the Dardanelles against any possible attack from the west they had not done the same with the Bosphorus, which, given Russia's well known designs on their capital, seems a rather remarkable omission.

Then again, there was the not unimportant question of how France, Russia's ally, was likely to react. After all, it could not be discounted that the French might very well intervene with their naval forces as to make any defence of the Ottoman capital by Britain highly problematic. (23)

Faced with this synopsis, a somewhat dispirited Goluchowski was forced to conclude:

"Whatever might occur in the Turkish capital Great Britain would certainly neither move nor interfere and had practically renounced her traditional policy in the east of the Mediterranean." (24)

After this reflection the Habsburg Foreign Minister was forced to the rather sobering conclusion, that his personal feelings as a Pole apart, the Monarchy had very little option but to seek a modus vivendi with her arch-rival, Russia in the Balkans.

Under Goluchowski's aegis a rapprochement with Russia was to take place which was to last for the next ten years. In the Spring of 1897 Austria-Hungary came to an arrangement with the Tsarist state whereby she agreed to inform her that any projected move by the Monarchy in the Balkans affecting the status quo would be discussed with Russia before hand. This had a particular relevance, of course, regarding the status of Bosnia-Herzegovina, occupied by Austria-Hungary in 1878. (A subject which, as will be seen, was to have momentous consequences not only for the relations between the Monarchy and Russia, but Anglo-Austrian relations too.) Austria-Hungary now committed herself to a similar agreement to that made to Italy when she subscribed to the Triple Alliance in 1881-i.e any gain by the one power would call forth commensurate compensation for the other power.

The failure to renew the Mediterranean Agreements in 1886 was to mark a watershed in the foreign policy of Britain at this time since it heralded the end of Salisbury's policy of 'limited engagement' with the powers of the Triple Alliance. However, it is important to realize that this was not self-evident at the time. With the effective abandonment of Britain's traditional support for Ottoman Turkey and the defence of the Straits more and more emphasis was to be placed upon Egypt

as the essential link of the chain of communications with India.

However, this being said, a further occasion for joint action between Britain and Austria-Hungary came in May 1896. In that year the Cretan Greeks again rebelled against Turkey and six months later in November the Greek government formally proclaimed the annexation of the island, dispatching an army of 'volunteers' to fight the Turks. All six powers, Britain, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, Germany and Russia, then intervened in order to call a halt to the fighting. Under the command of Rear-Admiral Rinke, Austro-Hungarian units worked in close co-operation with those of Britain and Italy and in March 1897 a certain Captain Kressler headed a joint Anglo-Austrian detachment which fought several engagements with the Cretan rebels. Finally a compromise was reached. The island was to remain under the Sultan's suzerainty but the second son of the Greek king, Prince George was named as the island's governor. At this point problems arose between Britain and Austria-Hungary, since, although the British welcomed the arrangement, the Monarchy saw this as the thin end of the wedge for the ultimate absorption of the island by Greece. As a result the collaboration with Britain broke down and the Monarchy withdrew its troops in March 1898.

ANGLO-AUSTRIAN RELATIONS 1898-1908

The Austro-Russian entente of 1897 was made with little regard to the feelings of either Germany or Italy and was in fact greatly resented by them. An interesting fact here is that it not only betokened a striking decline in the Monarchy's attachment to the defensive framework arrived at in the Triple Alliance but also indicated that the Habsburg government still believed that it had room to manoeuvre politically, and could still seek other options. However, most important of all, this rapprochement with Russia signalled the abandonment of Austria-Hungary's much valued link with Great Britain. In this context, in Goluchowski's review of international relations in the winter of 1897-98 he never refers to Britain at all - as if it were a *quantité négligéable*, a factor of no real account. Even

more astounding, perhaps, was the remark of the then Minister at Bucharest (1895-99) and soon Ambassador at St. Petersburg (1899-1906), Baron Aehrenthal, that the abandonment of all "illusory proclivities" vis-à-vis Great Britain was to the advantage of the Monarchy and one of the most welcome aspects of the agreement with Russia.(25) Aehrenthal's main regret was that the entente was essentially a negative one concerned with the maintenance of the status quo.

Faute de mieux, Goluchowski's agreement with Russia was really unavoidable now that the Mediterranean Agreements were effectively defunct. The main reason for their passing was that international affairs in the 1890's were increasingly governed by global issues. As a consequence the Weltmacht of Great Britain and the Monarchy with its comparatively limited area of interest in south-east Europe, had little in common. The Habsburg Empire's ineffectualness on the wider international stage was visibly demonstrated in 1898 at the time of the Spanish-American War. The United States had long had designs on Cuba and a revolt against Spanish rule gave that country the pretext it wanted for military intervention. Knowing full well that Austria-Hungary could scarcely offer the Habsburg Queen-Regent of Spain any practical help, Goluchowski hoped that the Monarchy might be able to act as a mediator between the two countries. Like his predecessor Kálnoky, Goluchowski was anxious to forestall anything that might destabilize the monarchies of the Iberian peninsula and give a boost to republicanism. However, at the end of the day, all the Foreign Minister was able to do was to organize an appeal to President McKinley's humanity through Washington's diplomatic channels- a particularly fruitless endeavour, as it happened. From Germany Goluchowski received only luke-warm support, while the British were- in the words of Baron Hengelmüller, the Austro-Hungarian Minister- "worse than useless." Indeed, in his view, Britain seemed only too anxious to appease the United States whatever the cost. In a remark which was amazingly prescient, Hengelmüller ventured to say that "America represented a greater threat to Europe than even the so-called 'Yellow Peril' since we shall all be ruined commercially and brutalized politically."(26)

However, the Spanish-American War apart, the other important world event of these years- the Boer War- was to show that sympathy for Britain still existed in the governing circles of the Monarchy and not least with the Emperor Franz Joseph himself. Given Germany's well-known enthusiasm for the Boers, Franz Joseph's remark to the British ambassador at a ball in Vienna to the effect that "dans cette guerre je suis complètement Anglais" (27) caused considerable anger in Berlin. Since the Kaiser himself had taken up the cause of the Boers with particular élan, this came close to being viewed as a personal affront.

Not only the memory of past co-operation was involved here but also some astute political reasoning. Franz Joseph's thinking, like that of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry, was that Britain's involvement in South Africa might very well force her to reappraise her role in the Mediterranean as of old, and not just from a naval point of view. This hope was reflected in the courtesy visit of another Austro-Hungarian naval squadron to Malta which was duly reciprocated by Admiral Fisher at Trieste. Gestures they may have been but, at a time, when the bulk of European opinion, whether public or official, was decidedly pro-Boer and anti-British, this was of great political significance. It certainly caused even more annoyance in Berlin. Within the Monarchy too there was considerable stir. Obviously taking their cue from Germany sections of the press and numerous deputies in the parliaments in Vienna and Budapest voiced their criticism and disapproval but the governments of both halves of the Monarchy steadfastly refused to reverse their pro-British stance. The Hungarian government even went to the extent of sanctioning the sale of the famous horses of the Puszta to the British army in order to help neutralize the raiding of the Boer Kommandos.

Whatever hopes may have been entertained of a more durable relationship proved, however, to be illusory. Thus, although both Austria-Hungary and Britain were to send military and naval contingents to the relief of the European Legations besieged in Peking after the outbreak of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, there was no special co-operation per se. The so-called 'Yangtze Agreement' between Germany and Britain in October of the same year was welcomed by Goluchowski but he was unable to help further a closer relationship between the two countries

when the prospect of a formal alliance was mooted the following year. (1901) In a very real sense the Habsburg Minister was clutching at straws when he thought that there was still a possibility of associating Britain more closely to the Triple Alliance. Goluchowski went so far as to give Count Deym, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in London, a free hand to do whatever he thought fit to expedite the negotiations between Britain and Germany, even though Deym had warned him that the chances of success were minimal. In spite of his well-founded scepticism, perhaps Deym himself did not fully appreciate that it was the Monarchy's serious internal problems, particularly the conflict between the nationalities, that was the prime reason for the failure to forge a closer relationship between Britain and Germany, and by extension, the Triple Alliance. The 'Dual Anarchy' was continually plagued with dissension between Magyars and Germans on the one hand and Slavs on the other, and was, thus, just not seen as a viable ally on the British part- or as Sir Edward Grey was later to put it: "One cannot steer with confidence by a star that may dissolve." Quite understandably, the British government balked at the idea of having, in the last analysis, to underwrite an Empire in which so many warring peoples and factions often reduced the Reichsrat to chaos, a veritable Tadelmarkt at the best of times. As it happened, the Germans would accept nothing less than Britain's full accession to the Triple alliance, even rejecting a British offer to revive the Mediterranean Agreements in which Germany rather than the Monarchy would play the central role. When Goluchowski learnt that the British intended to relegate Austria-Hungary to a secondary role he was not unduly perturbed by the ultimate failure of the negotiations. Then again, all things considered, he had no reason to replace the will o' wisp of an alliance with Britain at the expense of a concrete agreement with Russia- after all- 'a bird in the hand...'

It was scarcely surprising that links with Britain became even more tenuous as Austria-Hungary developed a closer relationship with Russia. As late as the summer of 1902, Goluchowski still entertained the idea that the end of the

Boer War might lead Britain to reconsider her attitude towards the Mediterranean and hence to a renewed period of co-operation with Austria-Hungary, but this proved to be chimeric. It has to be said that Goluchowski scarcely helped his own cause. In the autumn of 1902, the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, asked for Goluchowski's support in protesting against the passage of four Russian torpedo-boat destroyers through the Straits into the Black Sea. Even though they were unarmed this was technically a breach of the Straits Convention that forbade the passage of any Russian warships per se. At first Goluchowski expressed his sympathy for Lansdowne's position but then, when the Russian Foreign Minister, Count Lambsdorff arrived in Vienna on a state visit, he executed a complete volte face. From hinting at the possible revival of the Mediterranean Agreements, Goluchowski now declared that the violation of the Convention was only a minor matter of no real importance. Again, Lansdowne was to be positively incensed when the Habsburg Minister added that the Straits Question was in any case a cause célèbre for Britain and not Austria-Hungary and therefore a protest on Austria-Hungary's part was completely unnecessary. Whatever hopes of further co-operation with Britain were therefore destroyed by Goluchowski himself. In a sense he shot himself in the foot. Indeed Lansdowne's response was to declare that there would be no more talk of the Mediterranean Agreements and that was effectively that. The British Foreign Secretary's stance was in fact to be fortified by a report by the Committee of Imperial Defence in February 1903. According to the Committee even if the worst scenario were to materialize and Russia were to seize the Straits and Constantinople, Britain would still be able to contain any attempt by Russia to expand into the Mediterranean by her possession of Egypt as well as Cyprus.

Goluchowski's rapprochement with Russia rather than the reactivation of former ties with Britain was a fateful decision but an understandable one especially in view of events which had now occurred in the Balkans- in Macedonia. In the last analysis it was the potentially explosive situation here rather than any infraction of the Straits Convention which was of major concern to Vienna and made agreement with Russia essential.

THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION

In the context of 19th century and early 20th century conditions Macedonia was a mere 'geographical expression' -(Fig.3) to borrow Metternich's fortuitous phrase- but infinitely more nebulous than that of Italy to which the expression had originally been applied some 90 years previously. Centred on the Vardar valley in the Central Balkans, it was inhabited by a patchwork quilt of nationalities- Greeks, Serbs, Bulgars, Albanians and Vlachs, a nomadic people, speaking a Roumanian dialect. In August 1903, supporters of the Bulgarian Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO) and the Bulgarian Orthodox Church staged an uprising with the aim of uniting the area with Bulgaria. The rising was bloodily and easily suppressed, not least because the non-Bulgarian section of the population had little sympathy with a revolt which would bring them all under Bulgarian rule. The uprising did, however, have the result of bringing about the hoped for intervention of the Great Powers in Ottoman affairs once again but not in the manner wished for by the Exarch. There was to be no talk of erecting Macedonia into an autonomous province like Eastern Roumelia/South Bulgaria let alone the desired union with Bulgaria tout simple. More importantly and indeed more germane to the purpose here, the problem of Macedonia led to growing acrimony between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain.

From the strategic point of view, Macedonia was of vital interest to both the Monarchy and the Tsarist empire, straddling as it did the main line of communications between east/west and north/south in the Balkans as well as being in 'the back-yard' so to speak of both powers. In order to prevent any further potentially explosive situation developing there, the Emperors of both countries agreed to meet at Franz Joseph's hunting-lodge in Styria where on October 2nd 1903 they signed the so-called 'Mürzsteg Punctation', effectively cementing the entente of 1897. This arrangement caused considerable consternation not only in Berlin but also in London since the agreement established a virtual condominium of Austria-Hungary and Russia over Macedonia, while only nominally involving the other Great Powers. It was true that all the Powers were given a zone of their own to ensure that the projected administrative, juridicial and financial reforms were carried out but the

FIGURE 3.

The Treaty of San Stefano, 1878



Proposed state boundaries of Treaty of San Stefano, 1878

spiritus moventes were to remain Austria-Hungary and Russia. When Britain tried to secure some form of administrative autonomy for the Christian population this was decisively rejected and Macedonia's position as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire confirmed. One article of the Punctation was to prove particularly disastrous since it advocated the redrawing of administrative boundaries to take cognizance of 'existing ethnic realities.' However sound in conception the practical effect of Article III was to unleash a veritable bellum omnium contra omnes as far as the nationalities of Macedonia were concerned with marauding bands carrying out what was later to be called 'ethnic cleansing.' Each national group-or at least the extremists amongst them-tried to secure as much territory as possible before the Article should come into effect. As a result in highly contentious areas and villages where the peoples were inextricably mixed terrible atrocities were carried out. (28)

The nature of the complaints about the Mürzsteg Agreement By Britain and Germany were quite different in substance. While the Germans objected strongly to what they believed was the systematic erosion of the Sultan's authority by their chief ally, the British complained that the reforms did not go far enough and were largely cosmetic. Britain's criticism of the agreement became even more strident as the months passed. As far as the British Foreign Office was concerned the Austro-Russian condominium over Macedonia was effectively stifling any attempt to give the indigenous population of the area some meaningful control over their own affairs. In the following two years Russia was to suffer both military and naval defeat as well as revolution (1904-5) but the Monarchy was still to hold fast to the view that it was only the two eastern empires that had the right to draw up any reform proposals, while the role of the other Powers was merely to carry them out. There was little doubt that Russia's weakness at this time gave Austria-Hungary considerable political advantage vis-à-vis her Mürzsteg partner but she astutely refrained from exercising this leverage to the full, for fear of bringing into play the other Powers. From the Monarchy's point of view it was better

to have one chastened partner rather than several stronger states to deal with.

To carry out the projected reforms more money would be required and this could only be achieved, in the opinion of the Monarchy and Russia, by an increase of at least three per cent in the Ottoman customs dues. Here ensued conflict with Britain. As far as Sir Edward Grey was concerned any agreement on this question was dependent upon the prior acceptance by the Sultan of a concrete programme of reforms and a guarantee that the money so raised would not be spent on the Ottoman army. While thus refusing the Monarchy's (and Russia's) demand for an increase, the British, nevertheless, insisted on the implementation of certain juridicial reforms for which they had made specific proposals. Naturally this was completely contrary to the dual control agreed with Russia at Mürzsteg. Vienna was to be further annoyed by a report from the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at Constantinople, Count Pallavicini, who had been entrusted with drawing up any proposals, that the Russians were inclined to listen to them. Indeed, the Sultan agreed to accept them himself in April 1907.

Further conflict between the British and Austro-Hungarian governments followed in December when the British suggested that the internationally controlled gendarmerie be deployed against the Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek irregular bands (komitadjis) that were terrorizing the people. Both Aehrenthal and the new Russian Foreign Minister, Izvolsky, objected, saying that the purpose of the gendarmerie was to protect the Christians from the Turks and not to become embroiled in conflicts between the Christians themselves. Faced with the combined opposition of Austria-Hungary and Russia, Sir Edward Grey had to drop the proposal. However, this victory by Austria-Hungary was to prove ephemeral. Slav sympathizers in the British Foreign Office were becoming suspicious that the Monarchy's behaviour in Macedonia heralded an advance on Salonika while Russophile opinion came to blame the Monarchy for the continuing lack of law and order there. Thus, unwittingly, Vienna was paving the way for a future rapprochement between influential elements of the British Foreign Office and Russia. At this juncture the issue of Macedonia was to become entwined with the Sanjak Railway Affair, creating both more trouble with Britain and destroying the Mürzsteg Agreement too.

THE SANJAK RAILWAY AFFAIR

For some thirty years since the Congress of Berlin in 1878 had sanctioned, together with Bosnia and Herzegovina, the occupation of the Sanjak of Novibazaar, Austria-Hungary had possessed the right, by virtue of Article XXV, of constructing railways in that strategically important area lying between Serbia and Montenegro. (Figure 3.) However, it was only after the completion of the Bosnian railway system that the Austro-Hungarian government decided to exercise that right which it believed could bring it important economic and commercial advantages as well as political- however evasive it might be on that latter score. A railway would not only strengthen the Monarchy's influence in Macedonia but it would also have the additional advantage of forging a direct link with Turkey bypassing the existing one with Constantinople by way of the Serbian capital, Belgrade. The line would also link the railway network of Bosnia with the rest of the Balkan system and hence prevent it from becoming an effective cul-de-sac. Politically too, Aehrenthal thought he was being particularly astute in looking to the future when the well-known pro-British sentiments of the Russian Foreign Minister. Izvolsky, would quite possibly lead to the unravelling of the accord concluded in 1897. To act while the iron was hot, so to speak, while the agreement was still in force, seemed to him to be a strikingly sagacious move on his part. Rather curiously it does not seem to have entered his mind that the very act of advancing the Sanjak railway Project could very well be a self-fulfilling prophecy, bringing about the very scenario he was anxiously trying to anticipate. And indeed in St. Petersburg the project was seen as nothing less than an attempt by the Monarchy to expand its influence not just in Macedonia but throughout the Balkans to the detriment of Russia and quite at variance with the spirit of the Mürzsteg Agreement. When Aehrenthal tried to defend the plan by repeating Goluchowski's argument that the venture was a purely economic and commercial one and therefore not bound by the entente of 1897 the Russians were not impressed and indeed nationalist and pan-Slav opinion in Russia far from being assuaged was inflamed at what was perceived to be 'obvious deviousness' on the part of Austria-Hungary. That Britain stood to gain both politically and diplomatically by this development was clearly

seen by the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Charles Hardinge:

"The struggle between Austria and Russia in the Balkans is evidently now beginning and we shall not be bothered by Russia in Asia...The action of Austria will make Russia lean on us more and more in the future. In my opinion this will not be a bad thing." (29)

To the Monarchy's discomfort, which was to be repeated the following year with the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a subsequent chapter will show, the British were even more inclined to take Russia's side since they suspected- wrongly and much to Aehrenthal's annoyance- that the Monarchy was acting as a mere cat's paw for Germany. Unfortunately, for the Monarchy too, British suspicions were heightened by events at Constantinople where it seemed that Austria-Hungary had forged a deal with the Ottoman Sultan, whereby in return for sabotaging the projected juridicial reforms the Porte had given his blessing to the Sanjak railway. On February 5th, the day after the Sultan had given his assent, the ambassadors of Austria, Russia and Britain declined to obey their governments' instructions to present the reform plans to the Ottoman government, arguing that the timing was inopportune and the Turks would almost certainly reject them. The Austro-Hungarian ambassador, Pallavicini, blamed O'Connor, the British ambassador but he, together with Zinoviev, the Russian ambassador, laid the blame squarely upon Pallavicini. As a result both the British and Russian Foreign Offices came to the conclusion that the Monarchy was playing a devious game: sabotaging the juridicial reforms in return for the Sanjak railway. (30)

Given this scenario it was scarcely surprising that both Russia and Britain were now firmly convinced that it was futile to expect any meaningful reforms in Macedonia while Austria-Hungary occupied the position she did. As a result Izvolsky went so far as to say on February 17th to the British ambassador that Russia wanted to end its collaboration with the Monarchy and to ally itself with "those powers who are sincerely desirous of reforms" and "to get out of a dual action with Austria." (31) Over the next few months Austria

was to see its influence over Macedonian affairs gradually eclipsed and, indeed, by April Hardinge could note with evident contentment that for all practical purposes "the Mürzsteg programme is as dead as a doornail." (32) Britain in fact now displaced Austria as the Power with which Russia preferred to deal.

Macedonia was not the only source of conflict between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain in the years 1904-7. Once again in 1904 Lord Lansdowne asked for Austrian support in a protest to Turkey about the passage of the so-called 'Volunteer Fleet'- a Russian naval squadron- through the Straits to join the war against Japan in the Far East and once again he was rebuffed. It seemed that whenever Austria had an opportunity to mend fences with Britain she choose to throw them away. In the Spring of 1907 it was evident that things had come to such a pass that a new grouping of Powers was about to take place in the western Mediterranean with the visit to Cartagena in Spain and Gaeta in Italy by the British monarch, King Edward VII. This was in fact to be confirmed in May when agreements to maintain the status quo there made with the Spanish and Italian governments. Obviously directed against Germany, this new development did not augur well for Germany's principal ally, Austria-Hungary and indeed the news was received with some alarm in Vienna.

Outwardly Aehrenthal maintained a posture of 'studied equanimity' when he was notified of the agreements but he took with a pinch of salt the British Foreign Secretary's remarks that they essentially embraced the same principals as the original Mediterranean Agreements of 1887.

Another source of irritation between the two states arose from the Liberal Prime Minister Campbell-Bannerman's disarmament plans at the Hague Peace Conference in 1907. In spite of disclaimers to the contrary, Aehrenthal persisted in seeing this as yet another attempt to isolate Austria-Hungary's ally, Germany just like the new agreements in the western Mediterranean. In order to counter what he regarded as this latest intrigue by Britain Aehrenthal appealed directly to Russia to stand together with the two Central Powers in

either ensuring that no meaningful discussion on disarmament took place or effectively kicking the subject into touch by having it referred to an impotent sub-committee in which all three conservative monarchies would refuse to take part.

Aehrenthal had a double purpose here. Not only did he wish to block what he considered to be a particularly Machiavellian strategy on the part of Great Britain, but he also wanted to bring Russia back to a closer relationship with Austria-Hungary and Germany, the dissension over Macedonia and the Sanjak railway notwithstanding. In May Aehrenthal was in fact to go even further, hinting not only to the Russians but also the French that they might all co-operate together in imposing a moderate strategy in Macedonia and effectively neutralize Great Britain's more radical proposals. This plan however, was to backfire disastrously. The British government soon got wind of the idea and in a form which seemed to suggest that Aehrenthal's intention was to exclude Britain completely from any involvement in Macedonian affairs: to in effect create- in the words of the British ambassador in Vienna- "a Quadruple Alliance to the exclusion of Britain and Italy." That this was really Aehrenthal's intention is doubtful but the Austrian Foreign Minister never completely dispelled the suspicion that this was the case. ((33))

However, these considerations apart, the single most important factor in the deteriorating relations between Britain and Austria-Hungary from the turn of the century onwards was the growing suspicion of Austria-Hungary's ally, Germany in the realm of Weltpolitik. Already as early as 1896 Lord Rosebery, the well-known friend of Austria, had issued the caveat that "it is impossible for England to maintain her Entente with the Triple Alliance in European questions when Germany pursued an anti-English policy in Africa." (34) Thus, while Austria-Hungary herself had no bones of contention with Great Britain in the world arena since she did not pursue a policy of Weltpolitik, she could not remain immune from the fallout from the flak of her ally who did. British suspicions of Germany's ultimate intentions were heightened by the ambitious naval-building programme announced by Admiral

Tirpitz in 1897. The building of a High-Seas Fleet far beyond the needs of coastal defence or commercial trade with Germany's colonies could only have one rationale in the eyes of British statesmen: to challenge the Royal Navy's command of the sea, both at home and abroad. Possessing no colonial ambitions on the scale of Germany which could come to conflict with Britain the Monarchy was in fact on this issue at least anxious to mediate between her ally and Britain, and this is in fact what she did regarding dissension over the Anglo-Belgian treaty on the Congo. (35)

However, failure on the part of Britain and Germany to resolve their differences elsewhere in the years 1898-1901 and the Kaiser's vociferous support for the Boers made it quite clear that the Monarchy could not expect much sympathy for her special concerns in the Balkans and the Near East-unlike the previous decade when the Mediterranean Agreements had been in force. After the conclusion of agreements between Russia and Britain over spheres of influence in Persia and Central Asia in 1907-8 it was increasingly apparent that the Monarchy had to face the unpalatable fact that in the event of war between her and Russia-which seemed likely at the time-the Empire could not even rely on a benevolent attitude on the part of Great Britain. Ironically too, Aehrenthal's desire to demonstrate that Austria-Hungary was still a fully independent power, pursuing its own strategic interests, the alliance with Germany notwithstanding, by the formal annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, dramatically backfired. This act was in fact to confirm the suspicions aroused by the Sanjak Railway Project that the Monarchy was ipso facto acting as Germany's 'cat's paw' in the Near East. And it was this belief that was to change for ever Britain's attitude to the Habsburg Empire as Chapter V will show.

CHAPTER IV

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA CRISIS (1908-1909)

The Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis of these years proved to be the most serious event in European affairs in the first decade of the 20th century since it nearly led to war between the two opposing alliance systems of Austria-Hungary on the one hand and Russia and France on the other. The background to the crisis lay in the Young Turk revolution at Constantinople in the late summer of 1908 in which the autocratic Sultan Abdul Hamid II was overthrown. Ideologically, the Young Turks were modernizing liberals who wanted to give the Ottoman Empire a constitutional form of government with an elected parliament representing all the provinces of the Empire. Somewhat ironically perhaps, this seemingly noble aim was to impact in dramatic fashion on Anglo-Austrian relations and to create a atmosphere of mutual suspicion which was never to be completely dissipated, as will now be seen.

Although the Young Turks were eager to display their progressive democratic credentials they were, nevertheless, also strongly nationally minded and determined to resurrect effective as opposed to nominal authority over Bosnia and Herzegovina, the two most north-westerly provinces of European Turkey, occupied and administered since 1878 by Austria-Hungary. Their determination to ensure that the provinces should elect representatives to the newly projected Ottoman parliament in Constantinople meant that there was a very real danger that the Monarchy would lose possession of them. (Fig.1) Even if this scenario were not to occur, nevertheless, the provinces would likely to remain in some kind of 'political limbo', bereft of any kind of constitutional government such as was to be found in the rest of Europe. From the point of view of Vienna there seemed only one way of resolving the impasse and cutting the Gordian knot and that was by the granting of an Imperial constitution which could only be done if Franz Joseph were accorded undisputed sovereign rights over the provinces which only annexation could ensure.

Ironically, although Austria-Hungary and Great Britain were to find themselves at loggerheads over this issue, Britain had actually acknowledged the Monarchy's claims to them in a secret agreement of 1878 and had she proceeded to annex them at that time none of the Great Powers, Britain included, would have

seriously objected- with the natural and notable exception of Turkey herself. However, the then Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Julius Andr ssy, had only advocated occupation as opposed to annexation lest the incorporation of more than a million and a half more Slavs into the Empire would threaten the delicate balance of power arrived at by the Magyars and Germans in the Ausgleich of 1867. As far as Andr ssy and many other Magyar magnates were concerned there were enough Slavs in the Empire already and any more could fatally weaken the German-Magyar condominium of the Monarchy. Naturally, Andr ssy was anxious to sweeten the bitter pill that the Turks were being forced to swallow and thus lessen their resentment and possible antagonism in the future. As a result, he readily agreed to a specific declaration that:

"The rights of sovereignty of his Majesty the Sultan over the provinces of Bosnia-Herzegovina shall not be affected by the act of occupation..that the occupation shall be considered provisional and that a previous agreement to the details of the occupation shall be made by the two governments immediately after the closing of the Congress." (1)

This declaration came to be enshrined in the Convention of Constantinople on April 29th 1879.

As it happened the Habsburg government did consider replacing occupation with annexation on two important occasions in the coming years. Thus, in the First Article attached to the Protocol of the Triple Alliance between the Monarchy, Germany and Italy on June 18th 1881, it was declared that the Empire "reserves the right to annex these provinces at whatever moment she shall deem appropriate." (2) Sixteen years later in May 1897, a secret despatch to the Monarchy's ambassador in St. Petersburg, Prince Lichtenstein, further stressed:

"The territorial advantages accorded to Austria-Hungary by the Treaty of Berlin are and remain acquired by her. In consequence the possession of Bosnia, of Herzegovina, and of the Sandjak Novibazar may not be made the object of any discussion whatsoever, the Government of his Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty reserving to itself the right of substituting when the moment arrives, for the present status of occupation and the right of garrisoning that of annexation." (3) (Fig.1)

In reply to this, however, the Russian Foreign Minister,

Count Muraviev, had issued a distinct caveat, saying that the Treaty of Berlin had merely concerned itself with the military occupation of the two provinces- annexation was a totally different matter and one "which would require special scrutiny at the proper time and place." (4)

The Young Turk revolution of 1908 effectively brought to a head a problem which had lain dormant, if occasionally simmering for thirty years. Consequently the new Foreign Ministers of Austria-Hungary and Russia, Count Aehrenthal and Alexander Izvolsky met at Count Berchtold's castle of Buchlau in Moravia on September 15th 1908 where some kind of verbal agreement was concluded, the exact details of which were later to be hotly disputed by both sides. The general content, however, was the following:

"If Austria-Hungary were forced to proceed to annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Russia would adopt a friendly and benevolent attitude while the Monarchy would observe the same attitude in case Russia should see herself compelled by her interests to take steps for assuring the free passage of individual Russian men-of-war through the Darda nelles." (5)

In fact by the end of September Aehrenthal had taken all the steps necessary to perfect the annexation and seems not to have expected any serious opposition from Great Britain as one of the Signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin.

As a result, on September 28th, Aehrenthal wrote a letter to the British Under-Secretary of State, Sir Charles Hardinge, informing him of the Monarchy's intention to both annex Bosnia-Herzegovina and to evacuate the Sandjak of Novibazar- the latter as a kind of sweetener for the Turks' definitive loss of the former. To justify the Empire's action and as a kind of apologia pro vita sua, Aehrenthal detailed the Monarchy's role in the economic and social development of the two provinces in question and an expensive one at that. Finally, he concluded that the destruction of the ancien régime at Constantinople by the Young Turks made the political prgogree of the two states imperative. This entailed the creation of a constitutional framework which could only be achieved if the Emperor had full sovereign rights over them: annexation was the only valid option. (6)

Aehrenthal's sentiments were echoed the following day by Franz Joseph himself in a private letter to the British King

Edward VII. The Austrian Emperor stressed too that it had been at Great Britain's specific request in 1878 in any case that the Monarchy had assumed control of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Emperor concluded his letter with the assurance that the annexation by no means heralded an aggressive forward policy by the Monarchy in the Balkans but merely the ultimate confirmation of the rights already conceded to her: a mere dotting of the 'i's and the crossing of the 't's, so to speak. Moreover, the Empire's voluntary evacuation of the Sandjak was concrete proof of Austria-Hungary's *bonne foi*. (7)

Four days later on October 3rd Aehrenthal's letter was handed to Hardinge by the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in London, Count Mensdorff, together with a brief explanation of why the Monarchy was now taking this step. As it happened the British Foreign Office had already been forewarned by the British Minister in Belgrade that the annexation of the two provinces was imminent since the Serbian Foreign Minister Milovanović had informed him of its likelihood. In fact a conversation with Aehrenthal himself had convinced him that the news would almost certainly be timed to coincide with the 60th anniversary of Franz Joseph's ascendancy to the throne. (1848-1908) (8)

Already too, on October 1st, the British ambassador in Vienna, Sir Edward Goschen had reported that there was much speculation about the annexation of the two provinces and it was widely believed that all the Great Powers with the exception of Great Britain had already agreed. In Goschen's view the annexation would have already been a *fait accompli* had the Hungarian parliament not raised objections to any change in the status quo. (9)

At this juncture Hardinge did not discuss the annexation with Mensdorff in any detail but merely pointed to the possible political complications. Since the Young Turk revolution Britain had been very pro-Ottoman and therefore anything which could destabilize the new government at Constantinople would be regarded as highly unwelcome. Given That Ferdinand of Bulgaria had also chosen this moment to

declare Bulgaria's independence there was every possibility that Greece and Serbia might come forward with demands for compensation- further destabilizing factors.(10)

Harding²duly passed Aehrenthal's letter to the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, who having read it, instructed Goschen to remind Aehrenthal that under the Protocol of 17th January 1879 attached to the Treaty of Berlin, no power, Austria-Hungary included, might abrogate its terms unilaterally but only in agreement with the other Powers. It therefore went without saying that Britain could scarcely be expected to sanction the violation of an internationally agreed treaty unless all the other Signatory Powers had concurred, particularly, of course, the directly interested party-Ottoman Turkey.(11) Consequently Goschen was instructed to disavow the Monarchy's action and "to impress upon the Austro-Hungarian authorities the necessity of reconsidering their decision to annex the two provinces." (12) Already on October 4th Grey had told Goschen to inform Aehrenthal that the British government was also opposed to Ferdinand's declaration of Bulgarian independence and indeed should be advised against it. Somewhat disingenuously Aehrenthal replied that he could scarcely advise against a course of action that he had no grounds for believing was being considered, but as it happened he had already done so. Consistency of thought was not at a premium in Aehrenthal's thinking at this point.(13)

When a few days later Ferdinand did precisely that, the Austrian Foreign Minister hastened to assure Goschen and Grey that the Monarchy had no idea he was going to do so, least of all so quickly. Hearing this Grey remarked: "You and we cannot but feel justly agrieved at being treated with such bad faith"(14) since Aehrenthal's "word of honour extended perhaps only to the precise date." (15)

The British King was more sanguine, saying that he would never be able to trust the Austrian Foreign Minister again. An attitude which Grey found in the circumstances only too understandable. Aehrenthal said he was "disagreeably surprised to learn that the annexation had evoked a great deal of bad feeling in Britain when Goschen told him of the fact on October

5th since it was well-known that Britain "had been notoriously in favour of Austria-Hungary's definitive possession of the two provinces." (16) To this Goschen rejoined: to agree to an occupation in 1878 was one thing but to accept a unilateral declaration of annexation some thirty years later was an entirely different matter. (17)

Whether Aehrenthal's surprise was genuine or feigned is a matter of debate but it is fairly clear that Britain could not look with equanimity let alone indifference at any unilateral act in the Balkans by Russia's great rival, Austria-Hungary, particularly now that Anglo-Russian relations had become much warmer.

Once again Aehrenthal rehearsed his familiar litany about the time, energy and expense the Monarchy had spent on 'civilizing' these two backward provinces. Objectively speaking giving "Bosnia and Herzegovina the rudiments of civilization" had been a thankless task and the least the Monarchy could expect was that Britain should adopt a friendly and sympathetic towards the annexation. (118) In any case, the Austrian Foreign Minister added, there could be no question of the annexation being rescinded since the Emperor had already signed the necessary documents. Goschen's enquiry as to why Austria-Hungary had not even seen fit to consult Turkey that had been given the legal right to protest by the Convention of 1879, Aehrenthal was sharply dismissive, saying that would not have made the slightest difference to the decision. (119)

Aehrenthal informed the British government officially of the annexation on October 7th leading to Hardinge's reply that the Treaty of Berlin had spoken only of "occupation" and "not annexation."

"The preamble to the Convention of April 17th 1879 between Austria-Hungary and Turkey had specifically stated that the act of occupation does not affect the rights of sovereignty of the Sultan." (120)

Once, however, presented with a veritable fait accompli, it was necessary for the British government to determine a response. Both Grey and Hardinge were agreed that there was no way an international treaty could be violated unilaterally by one of the Signatory Powers; all the Powers had to be consulted

and their endorsement of any changes to it obtained.(21) Since both statesmen had been warm supporters of the Young Turk revolution their attitude was hardly surprising. Thus, already on October 5th Grey told the Ottoman ambassador that if Turkey should exercise her legitimate right of protest under the Convention of 1879 then Britain would guarantee to support any proposal "which seemed fair compensation for her." (22) Nevertheless, Grey did issue an important caveat: Turkey should not allow herself to be provoked into war but should earnestly think in terms of some form of financial compensation.

Later Aehrenthal was to claim, unjustly, that Grey and the British government had deliberately set out to incite the Ottomans to adopt a hostile attitude vis-à-vis the Monarchy. Naturally, such an accusation did immense damage to the political relations between the two countries.

On October 9th and 11th Grey again stressed in conversations with the Austro-Hungarian ambassador, Count Mensdorff, that Austria-Hungary's seemingly cavalier attitude towards the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin was completely unacceptable to Britain and the latter was forced to inform his government in Vienna that the annexation "would stand like a stone wall before the two countries in any future discussions." (23) In a sense a diplomatic Rubicon had been crossed in the relations between the Monarchy and Britain.

If Mensdorff had any lingering doubts about how badly relations had been affected these were soon dispelled by his conversations with the King Edward VII after the latter had read the Emperor's letter. At first the British monarch had been restrained in his comments, merely saying that the seeming coincidence between the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria's declaration of independence was "regrettable." His remarks, however, were far more caustic when the act of annexation had actually taken place on October 7th. In quite unequivocal terms Edward told Mensdorff that the Monarchy's failure to inform all the Signatory Powers of her real intentions vis-à-vis the Treaty of Berlin was absolutely deplorable and reprehensible in the extreme. The Austro-Hungarian government had with one fell stroke done

immense damage to the Young Turk régime at Constantinople that Britain was anxious to support

Lord Redesdale later recalled the scene between the King and his counsellors when it was known that the annexation was now a fact.

"No one who was there can forget how terribly the King was upset. Never have I seen him so moved. He had paid the Emperor of Austria a visit at Ischl less than two months before. The meeting had been friendly and affectionate, ending with a hearty 'auf baldiges Wiedersehen.' The two sovereigns and their two statesmen Aehrenthal and Hardinge had discussed the Eastern Question, especially the Balkan difficulties, with the utmost apparent intimacy and the King had left Ischl with the assurance that there was no cloud on the horizon and without a word of warning all was changed." (24)

The Times correspondent in Vienna, Henry Wickham Steed recalled Edward telling him that Franz Joseph had made no allusion whatsoever to the coming annexation when he was at Ischl and his failure to do so was, in the King's view "a clear breach of faith." (25)

In all fairness to the Emperor, however, it should be said that at the time of his conversations with Edward on August 12th the Monarchy had not yet taken a definite decision to annex the two provinces. Obviously, had the specific question of Bosnia-Herzegovina been raised by Edward and Franz Joseph had either prevaricated or dissimulated then the accusation of 'mauvaise foi' would have been justified. It might be objected that the Emperor himself could have raised the question but then this might very well have interfered with the plans of his Foreign Minister, Aehrenthal and caused additional complications. In diplomatic circles the old adage 'Least said, soonest mended' is probably a true one. (26)

Edward VII replied to the Emperor's letter on October 14th and again emphasized the British government's concern at Austria-Hungary's wanton disregard of all the terms of the Treaty of Berlin regarding the status of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Specifically he pointed to the Protocol of January 17th 1879 where it was stated that all the Signatory Powers had to give their consent to any alteration of the terms. Franz Joseph's comment was a classic understatement: "Evidently, the King was not at all pleased" and he added: "I am sorry for it, but

really annexation was inevitable, and had to take place." (27) When the British ambassador, Goschen, mentioned that there was widespread suspicion in England that the annexation and the proclamation of Bulgarian independence were hardly coincidental, Franz Joseph hotly denied that there had been any collusion with Ferdinand of Bulgaria. The Emperor further tried to reassure Goschen that during the course of the Bulgarian King's state visit to Vienna the subject had never once come up. Ferdinand had never even mentioned the possibility let alone its imminence. Had he done so Aehrenthal would have been certain to have mentioned the fact, it being absolutely inconceivable that his Foreign Minister would have concealed such a vital piece of information. (28) The possibility remains, of course, that Aehrenthal suspected Ferdinand's ultimate intentions but chose not to verify his suspicions as to its imminence or otherwise so that he would not actually have to lie if asked by Franz Joseph or anyone else.

Once the annexation had become a *fait accompli* diplomatic exchanges between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain now revolved around the following three main questions: 1) Under what conditions and in what form should the Signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin accept it? 2) What kind of compensation should Turkey receive and 3) What kind of compensation should Serbia and Montenegro receive (if any) as two directly interested parties?

The best way to resolve the crisis, at least *prima facie*, seemed to be through the summoning of an international conference, but both Grey and the Ottoman government soon came to the conclusion that this would lead to the very real possibility of Russia raising the question of the Straits. (29) Aehrenthal's reaction was to say that while he was not opposed to the summoning of a conference *per se*, the Monarchy would insist that the conference would only have the right to either agree or disagree and then only after an understanding had been reached with Turkey. To allow an actual discussion on the annexation would be *de facto* admitting that the question was up for revision which it decidedly was not.

At this point the intervention of the German ambassador, Count Metternich, became crucial. In a conversation with Grey, he said that while Germany had the deepest sympathy for Ottoman Turkey, nevertheless, his government must and would stand by its Austro-Hungarian ally and therefore Germany could not possibly take part in any conference where the actual principle of the annexation came up for debate. Grey was not over-impressed by Metternich when he said that naturally the Monarchy did not want war and rejoined: "Most countries wanted to get all they wanted without having the trouble of going to war, but an attempt of this kind was often the cause of war." (30)

Italy's support for a conference, however, even though she were a member of the Triple Alliance, led the Russian Foreign Minister, Izvolsky and the French ambassador, Paul Cambon, to begin drawing up an agenda for the hoped for conference. The agenda consisted of the following eight major topics:

1. Bulgaria's international legal position and her obligations to Turkey.
2. The question of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
3. The provisions of Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin vis-à-vis Turkey's European possessions.
4. The legal position of the Sandjak of Novibazaar in view of the Monarchy's actions.
5. Possible revision of the conditions laid down in Article 29 of the same treaty regarding the sovereign rights of Montenegro.
6. Possible frontier rectifications in favour of Serbia
7. and Montenegro where Bosnia-Herzegovina abutted the Sandjak
8. The Balkan States and their rights of navigation on the Danube.

Grey and the French Foreign Minister, Stephen Pichon reworded talk of "frontier rectifications" to "advantages to be obtained by Serbia and Montenegro" but apart from that they both voiced their approval for the draft agenda. The Austro-Hungarian ambassador did not actually receive a copy but the German ambassador did, forwarding a copy to Aehrenthal. The Austrian Foreign Minister certainly did like the phrase "frontier rectifications" but then he did not like Grey's and

Pichon's amendations either, since any "advantages" could still be at the Monarchy's expense. At this juncture the Austrian Minister ominously warned that were Britain to support such demands then this would only encourage Serbia and Montenegro's obduracy, giving the Monarchy no option but to take military action against them. Neither Britain nor France should doubt that the Empire would defend its vital interests and would not sit idly by while Serbia mobilized and the Serbian press adopted an increasingly belligerent tone.(31)

In Vienna itself there was a strong war party headed by the Chief of the Austrian General Staff, Conrad von Hötzendorff, who had been convinced for some time that only resolute military action could put an end to the "Serbian menace." Aehrenthal was a determined man but he did not want war, unlike Hötzendorff, and in this he was supported both by the Emperor and the Heir Apparent, Franz Ferdinand, who was wrongly supposed in some diplomatic circles as another belligerent. Curiously, though, for reasons they did not explain both Aehrenthal and Franz Ferdinand believed that "these Balkan curs"-i.e Serbia and Montenegro- were being manipulated by Great Britain and possibly Italy. While eschewing any aggressive moves such as army mobilization, Franz Ferdinand urged Aehrenthal to apply strong diplomatic pressure on both Serbia and Montenegro and to leave them in no doubt that they could not expect any territorial compensation.(32)

Turkey found herself in a particularly difficult situation believing that an international conference could very well end with the Great Powers sanctioning the annexation and she would much rather that the matter should be resolved legally at some indefinite point in the future. In the meantime the Turks decided to exercise their right of protest and went on to impose a boycott of Austro-Hungarian goods.(33) The Ottoman Grand Vizier further came forward with a plan to make Bosnia-Herzegovina into an autonomous state ruled by a Protestant prince appointed by the Great Powers but under the aegis of a restored Ottoman authority rather than that of Austria-Hungary.

The furore around the annexation and the possibly catastrophic consequences that might ensue it naturally became the main subject on which discussions between Mensdorff and the British government took place. Grey had ruled out the plan mooted by the Grand Vizier, knowing that in deference to her Austro-Hungarian ally Germany was bound to reject it, even if Italy, the other member of the Triple Alliance were willing to support it. Grey was, however, adamant that Turkey was fully entitled to compensation for the loss of her rights, however nominal they might be, and rejected Mensdorff's contention that the evacuation of the Sandjak should be regarded as a sufficient quid pro quo. Grey was at pains to assure Mensdorff that the compensation that Britain had in mind was not territorial but financial, such as Austria-Hungary's assumption of part of the large Ottoman state debt.(34) Grey then went on to categorically reject reports in the Vienna press that Britain was "maliciously" preventing any resolution of the crisis by urging Turkey not to engage in bilateral talks with the Monarchy. Hardinge also raised the question of financial compensation directly with Aehrenthal in the Austrian capital, but the latter said that while not opposed to this proposal per se, he could not agree as this could be very well perceived internationally as "weakness on Austria-Hungary's part." (35)

Hardinge's report to London met with grave misgiving especially as Aehrenthal had made it further clear that there could be no talk of compensation for Russia's two Slav protégés, Serbia and Montenegro. Grey was to reply by reminding Aehrenthal that Britain had played the role of good friend to the Monarchy by continually urging Serbia to adopt a conciliatory tone and to foreswear any thought of territorial compensation. Now, it had to be said: it was the Monarchy's obduracy that was undermining stability in the Balkans and even threatening the overthrow of the Karadageordgević dynasty.(36)

Mensdorff was clearly embarrassed by Grey's strictures since he went so far as to say that if the decision were his

he would make concessions not purely for tactical reasons but because it was the right thing to do. While not wishing to antagonise his superior Aehrenthal, Mensdorff informed him that the Monarchy should be under no illusion as to where Britain would stand in the event of any conflict- on the side of the Turks- and this was the view of both the British government and the King. The sacrosanctity of treaties were uppermost in their minds.(37)

True to form, Aehrenthal paid scant attention to Mensdorff's warnings but merely replied by asking Mensdorff to convey his thanks to Grey for his attempts to act as a moderating force on Serbia.(38,39) Aehrenthal's main concern, however, was to inform Grey that he took strong exception to the hostile reports which were appearing in the British press which could only give aid and comfort to the Serbs in their intransigence. Finally, Mensdorff was instructed to tell Grey that the Monarchy's assent to a conference would depend on a preliminary agreement between the Signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin: this would be the sine qua non. In general terms, however, he found the draft agendum relayed him confidentially by the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Berlin acceptable and would just say the following:

1. Austria-Hungary would recognize Bulgaria's independence provided that her financial obligations to Turkey were fulfilled.
2. Bosnia-Herzegovina might appear on the agendum as long as the Emperor's decision to annex them were not discussed and further: the reasons for the evacuation of the Sandjak were not asked.
3. Austria-Hungary would not object to the abrogation of Article 23 of the Treaty limiting Montenegro's sovereignty provided that she agree not to fortify her coasts or build a naval base at Antivari.
4. The phrase in the draft agendum "advantages to be given to Serbia and Montenegro" should be reworded to "economic advantages" so as to preclude any idea of territorial gains.

Aehrenthal was adamant there could be no deviations from these preconditions for the conference. In the following weeks suspicion on Aehrenthal's part had still not abated in view of the fact that Grey refused to endorse his demand that Turkey end her boycott of Austro-Hungarian goods before any talk of compensation took place.(40)

Once again Grey proposed that the Monarchy assume a portion of the Ottoman debt and once again Mensdorff was instructed to say that the evacuation of the Sandjak was surely compensation enough. Neither this nor Aehrenthal's reiteration of the economic costs of the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina impressed Grey or the British government in general. (41)

Towards the end of November Mensdorff gave a detailed synopsis of his discussions with members of the British government, concluding, unlike Aehrenthal, that he did not believe that any of them wanted war to break out in the Balkans and reports to the contrary in both the Austrian and German press were not just "mischevious" but positively dangerous. In his view Britain was earnestly trying to resolve the crisis diplomatically but if diplomacy were to fail Austria-Hungary would have to reckon with Britain's support of Turkey. (41a)

Somewhat curiously, perhaps, while Grey refused to accept Aehrenthal's demand that the conference should not include any discussion of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, he, nevertheless, said he was prepared to conclude a secret agreement to the effect that the subject would not in fact be raised. Hardinge was rather less obtuse and said that Aehrenthal's position was quite absurd: he could hardly expect the conference not to review the matter when the whole point to the conference was the fact that it had been specifically summoned in response to Austria-Hungary's unilateral violation of the Treaty of Berlin through the act of annexation. (42) It was going even further into the realms of absurdity to expect the injured party-Turkey- not to raise the question either. (43)

With an eye to Russia- which to Grey's relief had not raised the thorny question of the Straits- Grey tried to persuade Aehrenthal to make meaningful concessions to Serbia, Russia's chief protégé in the Balkans. If Grey were alarmed at the Austrian Minister's intransigence, he was equally alarmed at Serbia's military preparations and Russia's potential part in all this. However, Aehrenthal was not to be

moved, saying that there could only be a question of some form of economic compensation, territorial being completely out of the question as the rewording of the agendum had made abundantly clear. When in a conversation with Count Széchenyi, Austria-Hungary's Councillor at the London embassy, Hardinge said that there had to be a spirit of compromise "de part ou d'autre" Aehrenthal's reply was as good as snubbing, saying that while he appreciated Britain's attempts to make the Serbs see reason, Austria-Hungary had not asked for assistance in the past and would not do so in the future. Hardinge took this diplomatic slight coolly, saying that Britain was quite aware that her help had not been solicited- how could it be otherwise?- but he was merely informing Széchenyi of the fact that Britain had always tried to play a moderating role. Neither, Hardinge said, was it the British government's intention to give the Austro-Hungarian government lessons in good behaviour, although it was quite evident that Hardinge thought it could well do with them, particularly the Foreign Minister. (44)

On November 30th 1908, Aehrenthal wrote privately to Mensdorff, saying that he took all the protestations of friendship on the part of Britain "cum granu salis" since he had little doubt that Britain had thwarted plans for direct negotiations between the Monarchy and Ottoman Turkey. He would not be surprised either if 'Albion perfide' as the French were wont to say- had instigated the boycott of Austro-Hungarian goods. For Aehrenthal there was no doubt that if Britain had not actually incited Turkey to protest against the annexation then it had at least encouraged the Turks to make difficulties. All the seeming sweetness and light emanating from the British Foreign Office would not persuade him otherwise. There was certainly the widespread belief in Vienna- and not just at the Ballhausplatz and in government circles- that Britain was deliberately fanning the flames of hostility between Turkey and the Monarchy, even if this might, in extremis, lead to war. Then again war with Serbia could not be ruled out. Fortunately, Aehrenthal contended, Russia was unlikely to intervene given her internal economic and military

weakness, stemming from defeat and revolution in 1904-5. Russia would, naturally, in these straightened circumstances be unwilling to face Germany, Austria-Hungary's ally, if the worst case scenario were to develop. The Austrian Minister said he was fully aware that the British were labouring under the impression that he was merely 'a tool' in the hands of Berlin but in fact nothing could be further from the truth. Austria-Hungary was perfectly capable of discerning where her interests lay without the prompting of another power and both Hardinge and the British King had been told this the previous summer. Evidently, though, the British were convinced that Germany was the *éminence grise* in the affair and nothing the Monarchy said or did could make them alter their impression. Thus in attacking the Monarchy, Aehrenthal added, Britain thought it was attacking the real enemy-Berlin.(45) If further proof were needed about a widespread conspiracy against Austria-Hungary on the part of Britain then Edward VII's behaviour vis-à-vis Mensdorff was evidence enough. The Austro-Hungarian ambassador had in fact been sent to a kind of 'political Coventry' and thus official slights had been compounded by personal ones. Mensdorff should emphasize that it was not only himself (Aehrenthal) that was worried about the attitude of Britain but the Emperor as well. In fact Franz Joseph, too, was perturbed that Britain was trying to incite all the Great Powers against the Monarchy and not just Turkey and Russia. The Emperor, Britain scarcely needed reminding, but he had to do so, had always made the preservation of peace the Monarchy's priority, but Serbia's attitude made this extremely difficult. Given similar provocation, Aehrenthal went on, he doubted whether Britain would be so forebearing. Thus, the Emperor felt in giving support to the Serbs, Britain was embarking on a highly dangerous course which could only make military action against Serbia more likely.(46) Further the British press's accusation that the Monarchy was consciously aiming at the destabilization of the Young Turk régime at Constantinople was patently absurd but the Monarchy could not and would not accept Russia and Turkey's demand that the annexation be discussed at

any projected conference. Having given full vent to his spleen, Aehrenthal did, nevertheless, end on a cautiously optimistic note, saying that he did not believe it would come to war, but a lot depended on Britain withdrawing its support for Serbia. Somewhat bizarrely perhaps Aehrenthal ascribed Britain's attitude to "motives of pure hatred", since otherwise it was scarcely comprehensible. (47)

Once again Mensdorff was guarded in his reply, not wishing to antagonize Aehrenthal further. However, he made it clear that he disagreed with the Minister totally. The British government was not inspired by malice but quite simply by its desire to uphold the sanctity of treaties and to ensure the stability of the Young Turk government at Constantinople. Britain had no desire to see a conflict between Austria-Hungary on the one hand and Turkey and Serbia on the other. Britain's paramount concern was for an agreement between all the contending parties, and had no interest in preventing one. (48) The preservation of peace was Britain's overriding concern and the crisis had to be resolved either through an international conference or an exchange of Notes. If the legal position of Bosnia-Herzegovina were not defined quickly then there was the very real danger that Russia under the pressure of strong pan-slavist opinion at home, would be forced to intervene, hence igniting a general European war. Finally, Mensdorff concluded by saying that the differences between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain were not so great, as Hardinge had indicated: The Monarchy's position was that Bosnia-Herzegovina "must not be discussed" while Great Britain's was that "it will not be discussed." (49)

Aehrenthal was not convinced by Mensdorff's attempts to put a favourable gloss on British policy and in a letter marked "strictly confidential", on December 17th 1908, again attacked what he considered to be Britain's obvious anti-Habsburg policy. The explanation for Britain's behaviour lay in the desire to strike at Germany and he took 'cum granu salis' Britain's protestations that she had no interest in formenting divisions between members of the Triple Alliance. Nor did he believe Grey when the latter asserted that the division of Europe into

two power blocs suited Britain admirably because it accorded with her traditional policy of maintaining the balance of power. In a sense, however, Aehrenthal was clearly right: The growing power of Germany, Austria-Hungary's chief ally, and Britain's greatest rival, coupled with Franz Joseph's refusal to support attempts by Britain to forge a compromise vis-à-vis Germany's naval expansion, meant that, nolens volens, everything the Monarchy now contemplated doing was regarded with increasing suspicion. In other words a significant sea-change in the relations between the two countries had taken place. From now on the hidden hand of the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin was looked for and indeed found in Austria-Hungary's actions, Aehrenthal's protestations notwithstanding. However, that said, Grey's pressing concern was to ensure the stability of the Young Turk government at Constantinople that the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis was threatening to imperil. Linked to this, of course, was Grey's avowed concern for the safeguarding of international treaties and the equally important consideration of not antagonizing Russia. From Aehrenthal's perspective, though, the Monarchy was the victim of a quasi-labyrinthine conspiracy, orchestrated by Great Britain and involving Edward, the British King, the British Foreign Office and the venal press of Fleet Street. In the Austrian Minister's view, it ill became Grey, as the chief representative of a nation which had never baulked at tearing up international treaties such as those regarding the 'Neutrality of the Seas' when it suited her interests, to lecture him about their 'sanctity'. Respect too for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was hardly a conspicuous feature of British foreign policy in the past and even when it was, Britain normally charged a high commission for her services; thus in 1878 the price of Britain's support against the onerous demands of Russia at San Stefano had been the cession of Cyprus. Although Aehrenthal was initially uncertain of Edward VII's views, as he admitted, a discussion reported by the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Paris, seemed to confirm his worst fears. According to the ambassador, the President of the Young Turk Committee, Ahmed Bey, had confided to him that the British monarch had described the boycott of Austro-Hungarian goods "a capital trick" and they

should "go on." To top it all, Aehrenthal said that he knew Edward VII disliked him personally and would much rather have Mensdorff as Foreign Minister. This part of Aehrenthal's letter ended with the Austrian Minister roundly declaring that it was quite obvious to him that Britain was angling for a formal alliance with Russia and France. (50)

Aehrenthal's conclusion was hardly an improvement on his original thoughts: British policy was motivated either by "an inexplicable bad-tempered mood or by ignorance and stupidity." Almost certainly, Goschen was to blame for this but there were limits to how much bad behaviour he could tolerate from the Crown and British government in general.

Understandably, Mensdorff found himself in a considerable predicament: given Aehrenthal's strictures how could he answer the Minister without antagonizing him further? Consummate diplomatist that he was, Mensdorff had recourse to a third party by expressing the considered view of the German ambassador in London, Count Metternich. Like Mensdorff, Metternich declared that there was nothing Machiavellian about British foreign policy- it was simply based on two cardinal tenets: the maintenance of internationally agreed treaties and support for the Young Turks. The idea that Britain was trying to strike at Berlin through Vienna was really fantasy. Similarly, he was convinced that Britain was anxious for Austria-Hungary and Turkey to agree and he believed Grey when he said that the British were doing all they could diplomatically to persuade the Turks to adopt a conciliatory attitude vis-a-vis the Monarchy. Hardinge had been right when he had suggested that the reason for Aehrenthal's failure to reach an agreement with Turkey lay in his refusal to countenance any form of financial compensation and had nothing to do with the scheming of 'Albion perfide.' (51)

For his own part, Mensdorff added, he did not believe that Britain wanted closer relations with either France or Russia since the British had good historical reasons to view both countries with mistrust and suspicion. It was well known too that Britain had always eschewed any formal alliances since formal alliances entailed the maintenance of large

standing armies that was contrary to British tradition. Mensdorff concluded by saying that Lord Knollys, Edward's personal private secretary had assured him that the King had not even met a leader of the Young Turks let alone used the words ascribed to him, which, in any case, were totally at variance with the King's way of speaking.(52)

The Austro-Hungarian ambassador himself, Count Khevenhüller, wrote to Aehrenthal, seconding Mensdorff's remarks and adding that since Ahmed Bey was "a notorious, idle gossip" little credence should be given to anything he said.(53) Khevenhüller admitted that the Minister's suspicions were not totally without foundation since there were members of the British Foreign Office such as Sir Arthur Nicolson, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State, who were in favour of a closer rapport with both France and Russia, but their views cut little ice with Sir Edward Grey.(54)

Aehrenthal's obstinacy presented not only problems for Sir Edward Goschen, who was never exactly persona grata with the Austrian Foreign Minister, but also his successor, Sir Fairfax Cartwright who arrived in Vienna in December 1908. En route to the Austrian capital Cartwright met with the French Prime Minister, Sir Georges Clemenceau and the French Foreign Secretary, Picton, who urged him to impress on both Franz Joseph and Aehrenthal that the Bosnia-Herzegovina issue was a potentially explosive issue unless it were resolved quickly. However, Cartwright's suggestion that a secret agent be despatched to Constantinople to find out what compensation would be acceptable to Turkey, and Clemenceau's, that an Austrian Archduke be sent to Russia to negotiate directly with the Tsar were both rejected on the grounds of their almost certain rejection by Aehrenthal.(55)

Once in Vienna Cartwright was soon made aware of how much the Austrian Foreign Minister disliked Great Britain and how much he suspected her of mauvaise foi. Aehrenthal was convinced that Britain was "at the bottom of the present troubles" and that she had "incited Serbia and Turkey to resist Austria", while the British press were responsible for "the Serbian trouble." (56) Unless the British government desisted from its

present malevolent course then the traditional bonds of friendship between the two countries could be considered at an end. What the ultimate consequences of Britain's attitude might be were unpredictable but as far as Serbia and Montenegro were concerned their undisguised hostility made any talk of concessions virtually impossible. Moreover, Aehrenthal ominously added, all the while Serbia persisted in her attitude the Monarchy would be obliged to maintain a large army on the Bosnia-Herzegovina frontier. The Monarchy would not be the power to initiate hostilities but if Serbia were to throw down the gauntlet, no-one should be in any doubt, that the Monarchy would not hesitate to pick it up. Finally, Aehrenthal said, he was not prepared to accept any further lectures from either Britain or Russia given the blatantly provocative attitude of the Serbs.

When Cartwright alluded to the possibility of Russian intervention Aehrenthal was somewhat sanguinely dismissive, saying that this was highly unlikely given that country's well-known economic and social weakness. He reiterated that as long as there was no "inconvenient discussion" of the annexation he was still prepared to accept the idea of a conference but the only concession of substance that could be considered was some form of financial compensation for Turkey. However, this would have to take into account the Monarchy's past expenditure in the two provinces, as he had already indicated.(57)

When Edward VII read Cartwright's report about his conversation with Aehrenthal he commented in the margin: "Baron Aehrenthal knowing that he is in the wrong uses offensive language towards England which however does not strengthen his case."(58) Although the Foreign Office detected a slight softening in Aehrenthal's stance, Cartwright was nevertheless instructed to tell the Austro-Hungarian government that Britain fully supported Russia in her attempt to gain concessions for Serbia and Montenegro. Austria's more conciliatory attitude towards Turkey did not mean that the Monarchy could expect any help from Britain in her policy of "still resistance" towards the two Slav states.(59) As a parting shot, Cartwright was also told to tell Aehrenthal that Britain

had far more to complain about in the Austrian press than Aehrenthal did in the British.

The Austrian Minister was also made acutely aware of British displeasure at his "deceitful behaviour" as far as the declaration of Bulgarian independence was concerned. In fact Grey had roundly declared:

"He felt much irritation with Baron Aehrenthal. But however, I agree that foreign affairs must be conducted without reference to personal feelings and as far as I was concerned I could assure him that I kept any personal feelings about the press or anything else in separate compartments." (60)

In spite of such "irritations" both Grey and Hardinge adopted a conciliatory approach vis-à-vis Mensdorff, knowing only too well the problems that he had dealing with his superior. Accordingly, Grey told the ambassador to inform Aehrenthal that Britain was prepared to accept certain parameters beyond which discussion would not go in the projected conference, but that it was essential that the Monarchy come to a speedy agreement with Turkey and Russia, Serbia and Montenegro's chief ally. (61) Aehrenthal replied to Cartwright by saying that relations with both Turkey and Russia were actually improving and a conference agenda had been agreed, although, he admitted, the extent to which the annexation might be discussed- were it to be discussed- was still at issue. A noticeable degree of flexibility on the Minister's part was therefore in evidence, much to Grey's relief. Aehrenthal had moved from determined opposition to any discussion of the subject at all in his aide-mémoire of December 8th to saying that since Russia had not opposed any possible annexation in the past she would not do so now. Izvolsky too had adopted a more flexible approach, saying that Russia would drop her demands for unlimited discussion of the Bosnia-Herzegovina question as she had in November. (22nd) Izvolsky further declared that he was particularly pleased that Aehrenthal had moved from his former intractable position but the Monarchy would have to accept that the question could only be resolved by general agreement amongst the Great Powers and decidedly not unilaterally. (62)

However, Aehrenthal was still far from content since five days later on December 22nd he declared that the Russian Note was unacceptable as it stood for no definite proposals had been put forward in it. He now voiced the suspicion that Russia did not want a conference now that the Monarchy had agreed to one and that an agreement with Turkey seemed close. Nevertheless, that being said, Austria-Hungary was prepared to make economic concessions to both Serbia and Montenegro. This would be a purely *ex gratia* act on the part of the Monarchy since she had no legal or moral obligation to do so. Mischevously, Aehrenthal went on to say that Austria-Hungary would insist that the Notes already exchanged between the Monarchy and Russia be shown to Grey and the British government as tangible proof that Izvolsky had supported the principle of annexation in spite of what he was saying now. Grey by no means wished to see either Izvolsky or Russia embarrassed so he hastened to reassure the Russian Foreign Minister that regardless of what the Notes contained Britain was still four square behind Russia in securing some form of compensation for both small Slav states. (63)

The prospect of an imminent agreement between Austria-Hungary and Turkey came as a great relief to both Grey and Hardinge but when Mensdorff now said that he hoped Britain would desist from supporting "the claims of Serbia and Montenegro", Grey was quick to remind him that Britain was obliged to take heed of Russian wishes since Russia was of great political significance to Britain. The settlement of political rivalries between the two countries in both Persia and Central Asia were of cardinal importance in British international relations at this time. Moreover, Grey reiterated that any diplomatic humiliation of Russia was likely to have severe internal repercussions since every Russian government was obliged to take note of powerful pan-Slav domestic opinion. (64)

On January 11th 1909 Mensdorff handed Hardinge an aide-memoire in which Aehrenthal declared the Monarchy's readiness to offer the Ottomans two and a half million dollars in compensation for the loss of Turkey's sovereign rights and

the state lands in the two provinces. Mensdorff also held out hopes of some kind of agreement with Serbia.(65)

The gravity of the situation, however, could not be underestimated since both the British and Austrian press were engaged in a mutual round of recriminations, with the Viennese Neue Freie Presse launching a particularly vitriolic attack on Britain on January 6th. The paper accused Britain of being the 'fons et origo' of all the problems that had lately befallen the Monarchy. Britain had in fact deliberately set out to demonstrate, *urbi et orbi*, that any friend of Germany could expect to have its vital interests threatened. In a remarkable tour de force the paper went on to declare that neither Russia nor France were seriously entertaining war but Britain was:

"Who can it be then who instils the poison into the Serbian cabinet? Who constantly lays snares for us At Constantinople and incites Turkey to boycott our goods? If a referendum could be taken throughout the Dual Monarchy on this question the unanimous answer would be England?"(66)

On the following day, January 7th, Cartwright reported from Vienna some singularly bad news that Aehrenthal was now accusing Britain of not only arming the Serbs but of financing a concerted campaign against the Monarchy as well. Cartwright said he was convinced "all the trouble comes from Berlin" where the German government "was assiduously trying to foment dissension between Britain and Austria-Hungary.(67)

When Mensdorff told Grey that it was widely believed in Vienna that Britain's apparent hostility to the Monarchy was directly related to the Habsburg Empire's alliance with Germany, Grey retorted that this was "patently absurd." In fact he had taken great pains not "to make mischief" between the two powers and again he added that the present balance of power in Europe suited British interests and therefore he had no intention of disturbing it.(68) When the British King read Cartwright's despatch he noted in the margin: "Aehrenthal's language about England and his conduct towards us savours of the bull in the China shop."(69)

As far as British complaints about the seemingly

orchestrated campaign against Great Britain were concerned, Aehrenthal said that in view of "the inflammatory and false reports" emanating from The Times Vienna correspondent, Henry Wickham Steed, Grey could scarcely expect the Austrian press to remain "restrained." (70)

The situation was further aggravated when the Wiener Mittagsblatt now declared that Edward VII was clearly "acting as an agent provocateur." When Hardinge took issue with Mensdorff over the caustic nature of the article in question the latter said that he totally condemned it but had to add that similar attacks on the Emperor in the British press merited equal condemnation. In any case Mensdorff hastened to assure Hardinge that the Wiener Mittagsblatt was "a paper of no importance." (71) However, that being said, it was apparent that the Austro-Hungarian ambassador was becoming increasingly uneasy at the way events were unfolding. Indeed, Aehrenthal was to be goaded to particular fury by the publication of two particular articles—one in the Illustrated Evening News and the other in the Near East Review. The Illustrated Evening News had gone so far as to compare the Emperor Franz Joseph with the notorious King of Bulgaria—'Foxy Ferdinand' (who well merited his sobriquet) and to disparage both rulers "as the two monarchs who had tricked Europe." (72) Knowing Franz Joseph's particular aversion to the Bulgarian king a more damning insult was hard to imagine. (72)

Like Mensdorff Hardinge was concerned to disassociate the British government from such personal attacks but felt obliged to point out that it was the fabricated reports about British intrigues at Constantinople that were providing the fuel for such vituperation. Allegations that Britain was encouraging the boycott of the Monarchy's goods, as well as frustrating any agreement between Turkey and Austria-Hungary were in fact in the realms of pure fantasy. Also the idea that the Balkan Committee under the leadership of Noel Buxton was orchestrating the boycott was preposterous. (73) In spite of this acrimonious atmosphere both Mensdorff and Hardinge nevertheless agreed to do what they could to restrain the wilder elements of their respective presses.

Since Aehrenthal had indicated that there was now a real

possibility of an agreement between the Monarchy and Turkey on the one hand and Turkey and Bulgaria on the other, the main source of friction between Britain and Austria-Hungary centred on the latter's conflict with Serbia. This presented a serious problem for Grey since he was anxious to retain the goodwill of Russia and could therefore scarcely afford to ignore Serbian and Montenegrin demands for compensation. Thus this concern was hardly altruistic but in order to appease Russia, the Balkan States' chief mentor. However, neither Grey nor Hardinge seriously entertained that territorial compensation was a viable option, as the Russian ambassador in London, Count Benckendorff, was demanding. The best that could be hoped for was some kind of economic and financial compensation like Turkey and in this they would have the full support of both Britain and France.(75) Hardinge was also at pains to convince Izvolsky that Aehrenthal had no real intention of attacking Serbia and thus, nolens volens, dragging Russia into a wider conflagration.(76)

Grey pressed Aehrenthal, through Mensdorff, on the question of compensation and only received the curt reply that there was never any thought of linking the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina with territorial compensation for either Serbia or Montenegro. As far as he and the Monarchy were concerned, once a definitive agreement with Turkey were reached, then all that remained would be the status of Crete and the modification of Article XXIX of the Treaty of Berlin, regarding Montenegro's sovereignty, which Austria-Hungary had already accepted in principle. The entire affair would then be effectively resolved.(77) Ominously, Aehrenthal was to make a scarcely veiled threat, saying that no-one should be in any doubt that the Monarchy would view passively any further increase in Serbia's military preparations and that even the Emperor's much vaunted policy of peace had its limits.(78)

Grey's alarm knew no bounds and on the following day, February 19th, telegraphed Cartwright, saying:

"We are very seriously disturbed by reports that Austria feels she may be compelled to take active measures against Serbia in the near future and is

already contemplating them. We doubt whether any assurances could induce Russia to regard such a situation with equanimity and the consequences of a war between Austria and Serbia might therefore be so far-reaching as to disturb the peace of Europe and involve other powers...To secure peace it seems undesirable to delay any longer discussion among the Powers of what settlement can be arrived at with regard to Serbian and Montenegrin interests. To initiate this discussion we would suggest that Austria should state confidentially to us what concessions she is prepared to make for we have always understood that she is prepared to make concessions about Article XXIX of the Treaty of Berlin and to offer some other advantages in addition." (79)

In the meantime, while in Berlin on a state visit by Edward VII, Hardinge sought to find out from the Imperial Chancellor, Prince von Bülow, whether Austria-Hungary would be willing to consider certain frontier changes to the benefit of Serbia and Montenegro and was bluntly told there was no chance of this whatsoever. Prince Bülow made it clear that all that could possibly be hoped for were economic concessions, including a commercial outlet to the sea for Serbia but this would depend entirely upon a prior agreement between the Powers. In reply Hardinge said that such a pre-conference agreement would be acceptable to the British government. (80)

Grey then advanced the idea that a collective *démarche* by the ambassadors of Britain, France, Italy and Germany should be made in Vienna, the purpose of which would be to discover exactly what actions taken by the Serbian government were unacceptable to the Monarchy and what future actions of a similar nature Austria-Hungary expected the Serbs to make. Such a *démarche* would also have the additional purpose of finding out what kind of concessions the Monarchy was prepared to make in order that constructive negotiations with Serbia could take place. (81) Grey's proposals, however, were effectively cold-shouldered by both the French and Italian ambassadors as well as the German in Vienna and dismissed altogether by the German government in Berlin a few days later. The Wilhelmstrasse's position was quite unequivocal- it stood fully behind the Monarchy and merely reiterated all of Aehrenthal's complaints against Serbia. As

far as Germany was concerned the Great Powers should just simply declare that Serbia's behaviour was unacceptable and would not be tolerated.(82)

From Vienna the British Minister reported that Austria-Hungary's patience was fast reaching breaking-point and unless Serbia changed its attitude promptly, then "the worst possible scenario could be expected"- the customary diplomatic euphemism for war. In the Minister's view, therefore, it was imperative that Russia be prevailed upon to make Serbia see reason. Only Russia had the moral and political authority to influence the Serbs and unless she were seen to be in the forefront of any diplomatic effort, any thing that the other Great Powers might attempt to do would be completely ineffectual. As Serbia's chief supporter Belgrade would have no option but to listen to what Russia had to say.(83)

Berlin's stance had made it abundantly clear to both Grey and Hardinge that any *démarche* at Vienna would be utterly pointless but, nevertheless, they considered it politic to inform Aehrenthal, through Mensdorff, that the aim of the *démarche* had in no way been an attempt to pressurize the Monarchy. The attention had been solely to discover on what basis fruitful negotiations with Serbia might take place.(84) Mensdorff's reply was that it was exceedingly difficult to contemplate any negotiations all the while the Serbs insisted upon territorial compensation. On this issue the Monarchy would brook no compromise. Grey then gave his assurance that he would do his best to ensure the Great Powers made Serbia fully aware that only economic compensation was possible but the *sine qua non* for this was a dramatic change in that state's behaviour vis-à-vis the Monarchy.(85)

For his part, Aehrenthal welcomed the abandonment of the idea of a collective *démarche* and went on to inform Grey that he hoped to sign a Protocol with the Ottomans on February 26th. This would legalize the annexation and the changes brought about by the abrogation of the Convention of 1879. The Austrian Foreign Minister then said that he had little doubt that the Great Powers would accept the new situation but it should be understood that the Monarchy would not tolerate any attempt

on their part to mediate between the Empire and Serbia. The Turks, Aehrenthal added, were reconciled to the annexation and it was chiefly the Serbs -to a lesser extent the Montenegrins- who were continuing to denounce it "on spurious legal and nationalistic grounds." Further they showed no inclination to desist from their military build-up. Once again Aehrenthal felt obliged to remind Grey and Hardinge that they could not expect the Monarchy to remain passive much longer.(86)

Coupled with Germany's evident backing for her ally, Aehrenthal's words were further proof-if any were needed-that the war-the so-called ultima ratio regum- could not be discounted. Thus, it came as a great relief to both statesmen when Russia came forward, without prompting on their part, to announce to the Great Powers that she would no longer support the Serbs in their demands for territory. The bitterness in Belgrade at this seeming volte face on the part of their greatest ally knew no bounds but given Germany's unconditional support for her Austro-Hungarian partner she really had no choice.(87) Instead Russia now concentrated on making the best of a weak diplomatic and political position by thwarting Aehrenthal's attempts to force Serbia to negotiate directly with the Monarchy without the benefit of Great Power mediation-a course of action the Russians had been alarmed to find both Britain and France had already considered.(88)

While the Serbs were debating how best to react given the dramatic change in Russia's position, the Protocol between Austria-Hungary and Turkey was signed on February 26th. The Turks rescinded their opposition to the annexation in return for an indemnity of two and a half million Turkish pounds: compensation for the surrender of their sovereign rights and the loss of Ottoman state lands. The following day-February 27th- Aehrenthal informed Grey that Serbia must accept the Protocol without qualification and that she must also promise "to pursue a correct and peaceful policy" vis-à-vis the Monarchy- only then could she expect to gain some form of economic compensation.(89) Grey answered this by saying that he earnestly hoped that Austria-Hungary would prove to be as conciliatory as Russia had been. To this Mensdorff responded

by saying that he agreed totally with his superior, the Austrian Foreign Minister, on this point- that Serbia would have to give guarantees of good behaviour. She would have to recognize the annexation without any 'ifs' or 'buts', cease her military build-up and refrain from any further border provocations. Grey was seriously alarmed at this riposte by Mensdorff since it seemed to imply a retreat from Aehrenthal's own draft agendum where he had spoken explicitly of "the economic advantages to be obtained by Serbia and Montenegro" as being a suitable subject for the projected conference to discuss. Grey said he would completely despair of European politics if Aehrenthal now reneged on his previous commitment.(90) Once again the Austrian Minister reverted to his former obdurate stance, saying that Austria-Hungary would only negotiate directly with Serbia. Grey's remark to Mensdorff that economic matters "belonged to the whole complex of Balkan questions" that the Great Powers needed to address, merely elicited the coldest of responses from Aehrenthal.(91) As far as he was concerned Russia's self-appointed role as guardian of Serbian interests was exceedingly irritating to the Monarchy and decidedly unhelpful since it merely prolonged the crisis.(92)

To rub salt into the wounds, so to speak, Aehrenthal now said he would no longer ask the Austrian and Hungarian parliaments to renew the commercial agreement with Serbia, due to expire on March 1st. To both Grey and Hardinge it was now clear that Aehrenthal would not shy away from a species of economic and political blackmail in order to reinforce his point. Again the Austrian Minister declared that guarantees of good behaviour on Serbia's part were absolutely indispensable and only then would economic questions such as "the transit between the Monarchy and Serbia" be discussed.(93)

However, if Aehrenthal could be obdurate, so could the Serbs. Supported by Britain the Serbs appealed directly to the Great Powers in a Circular Note, pointing out to both the Austro-Hungarian and The German ambassadors that Aehrenthal had already conceded the right of all the Signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin to discuss the subject of compensation in his own draft agendum. A point which Grey seconded.(94)

While Grey was relieved to hear that the Serbs had agreed to demobilize and to seek only a peaceable solution to the crisis, the actual wording of the Note worried him.(95) As a result, together with Izvolsky, Grey urged the Serbs to redraft the Note, indicating their readiness to live on good terms with the Monarchy in the future. It would be helpful too, they suggested, if the Serbs also declared that they were no longer seeking territorial compensation, nor for that matter, economic. As a kind of tour de force both Grey and Izvolsky further suggested that Serbia should declare unequivocally that she was only too willing to allow the Great Powers to collectively determine the outcome of the issue. Somewhat surprisingly, Russia was willing to go even further than Grey expected, saying that Serbia should not even eschew direct negotiations with the Monarchy. This move on Russia's part was undoubtedly due to a sober assessment of the country's economic and military weakness and an acute awareness that she was in no position to challenge Austria-Hungary- least of all when backed by her powerful ally, Germany.(96) Russia too was aware that Britain had promised her only diplomatic and not military support.

On March 10th the Serbian government finally handed the following Note to the Great Powers:

"Considering that from a legal point of view her situation in regard to Austria-Hungary has remained normal(!) since the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Serbia has no intention whatever of provoking a war against the neighbouring Monarchy, and in no sense desires to modify the legal relations with that power, while continuing(!) to fulfill on a basis of reciprocity her obligations of good neighbourliness and to maintain with Austria-Hungary, as in the past(!), relations involving interests of a material order, though having put forward the view that the question of Bosnia-Herzegovina is a European Question and that it appertains to the Powers signatory to the Treaty of Berlin to come to a decision with reference to the annexation and the new text of Article XXV of the Treaty of Berlin, Serbia trusting in the wisdom and justice of the Powers, leaves her cause in their hands without reservation as to the competent tribunal and in consequence without claiming from Austria-Hungary any compensation, whether territorial, economic or political."(97)

Aehrenthal declared that this statement was totally

unacceptable since it did not even meet Austria-Hungary's minimum demands. In fact the Serbian government had failed to take Izvolsky's advice that Serbia "should examine with the Cabinet in Vienna those questions which relate to the economic relations between the two countries". Moreover Serbia's declaration that she intended "to fulfill (continuant à remplir) her friendly relations with the Monarchy" struck Aehrenthal as the height of impudence, bordering as it did, on open sarcasm. The Minister's chief objection, however, centred on the fact that Serbia was still refusing to negotiate directly with the Monarchy and was putting all her hopes on the intervention of the Great Powers. As far as Aehrenthal was concerned Serbia's Declaration merely begged the question, answering none of Austria-Hungary's demands and thus he would wait upon a reply to the Note of March 6th. (98)

Grey was made forcibly aware of Aehrenthal's determination on this point by Mensdorff who told him that his superior in Vienna took grave exception to Serbia's appeal to the Great Powers as "the competent tribunal" especially as Austria-Hungary considered the crisis to be at an end with the signing of the Protocol of February 26th.

In reply, Grey reminded Aehrenthal that Serbia had every right to appeal to the Great Powers since the Treaty of Berlin was an internationally agreed document and the consent of all the signatories was required if any alterations were to be made to it. The fact that the Monarchy and Turkey had arrived at a prior agreement did not invalidate this proviso. Serbia was not obliged to recognize the annexation until the Great Powers had examined the issue and given their consent. Again Grey stressed that it was important that an agenda be agreed upon before the conference met.

On March 15th the Serbs gave their answer to Aehrenthal's Note of March 6th, but couched in terms which referred to their own Circular Note of March 10th, in which they had stated their attitude to the annexation. Serbia said that she wanted to live on neighbourly terms with the Monarchy, particularly as both countries enjoyed mutually beneficial economic and commercial relations. In this respect the Note went on, if the Austrian and Hungarian parliaments refused to renew the commercial treaty between their two states, could the old one not be extended? (99) It was not only the Austrian Minister

but the French, British and Italian Ministers in Belgrade also found the Note an impudent one. Indeed, the British Minister, Sir Louis Mallet was led to exclaim that the wording was "silly in the extreme" and clearly tailored to a domestic audience in Serbia so that King Peter was not seen bowing down before Austria-Hungary but at the request of the Great Powers.(100) Sir Louis continued by saying that "this reply does not meet the Austrian requirements in any particular and is impertinent in substance", bearing out Aehrenthal's view of Serbian behaviour completely. Given that Grey was trying to forge an agreement on an agenda, Serbia's stance was as embarrassing as it was frustrating. Grey commented despairingly: "Nothing to be done but to wait for the effect on Austria,"(101) Grey welcomed the Protocol of February 26th but still insisted that the Great Powers had the right to examine it before any definitive decision was arrived at, and when Mensdorff asked what other subjects should be considered at the conference, Grey mentioned the following:

- 1) The independence of Bulgaria and the anticipated agreement between Turkey and Bulgaria on this issue.
- 2) The economic compensation for Serbia in the hoped for agreement between Serbia and Austria-Hungary.
- 3) The alteration to Article XXI of the Treaty of Berlin limiting the sovereignty of Montenegro.(102)

Anxious that the dispute between Serbia and Austria-Hungary be resolved as soon as possible, lest the Monarchy delay the summoning of the conference, Grey drafted a Note for the Serbs to present to Aehrenthal. Asking him whether it were acceptable or not the Note declared:

"La Serbie pourrait fournir des assurances, qu'elle ne ferait aucune démarche qui créerait des difficultés ou directement ou indirectement, sur territoire autrichien: qu'elle observerait toutes les obligations d'amitié et de bon voisinage, tout en conservant son indépendance et son intégrité: qu'elle serait contente de profiter de l'offre faite par l'Autriche d'entrer en négociations directes pour la conclusion d'un traité de commerce et si l'on le trouve désirable, elle pourrait ajouter qu'il n'était pas de son ressort d'introduire des changements dans le Traité de Berlin mais qu'elle serait prête à accepter ce qui aurait été dûment reconnu par les Puissances Signataires de ce traité."(103)

What is particularly striking about this document is the

fact that Grey should imagine that Aehrenthal would be prepared to accept it, given his well-known aversion to third party interventions. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that Aehrenthal did in fact declare that it was completely unacceptable, especially as there was no indication on Serbia's part of her willingness to demobilize.(104) Having received Aehrenthal's reply through Mensdorff on March 17th Grey now instructed Cartwright in Vienna to ask Aehrenthal to draft a suitable declaration for the Serbs himself. Whether the Serbs could be induced to make such a declaration was, of course, another matter, but Grey promised he would use his good offices to persuade them to do so. However, it was imperative, Grey added that the Monarchy give an assurance that she had no intention of attacking Serbia in the meantime. Much to Grey's relief Aehrenthal said that Grey should have no fears on that score and further he could state that the Monarchy had absolutely no designs on Serbian territory. Austria-Hungary's military preparations were solely defensive in nature and forced upon her by that of Serbia's. Grey could surely understand that until the kingdom gave proof of good behaviour the Monarchy could scarcely act otherwise.(105) As for Grey's suggestion, the Austrian Minister said he was only too willing to frame a declaration which would satisfy the Empire's demands and, accordingly, despatched the following to Grey on March 19th:

"La Serbie reconnaît qu'elle n'a pas été atteinte dans ses droits par le fait-accomplî créé en Bosnie-Herzégovine. Elle déclare, qu'ayant appris l'arrangement survenu à Constantinople entre l'Autriche-Hongrois et l'Empire Ottoman, par lequel le nouvel état de choses se trouve matériellement réglé, elle abandonne l'attitude de protestation et d'opposition qu'elle a observé à l'égard de l'annexion depuis l'automne dernier, et elle s'engage en outre à changer le cours de sa politique actuelle envers l'Autriche-Hongrie pour vivre désormais avec cette dernière sur le pied d'un bon voisinage.

Conformément à ses déclarations pacifiques, la Serbie ramènera son armée à l'état du printemps de 1908, en ce qui concerne son organisation, sa dislocation et son effectif. Elle désarmera et licenciera ses volontaires et ses bandes, et elle empêchera la formation de nouvelles unités irrégulières aux frontières de l'Autriche-Hongrie et de la Turquie.

L'Autriche-Hongrie, loin de prétendre imposer des entraves au développement normal de l'armée serbe se borne à demander la révocation des mesures exceptionnelles

qui contiennent une menace à son adresse." (106)

Grey, in his turn, found this draft unacceptable-and indeed highly unreasonable-since Serbia could hardly be expected to declare that the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina did not materially affect her ineterests when it self-evidently did. It was doubly unreasonable to expect Serbia to go even further and make the self-denigratory declaration: "Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!"

Finally, how could the Serbs possibly be informed of the attitude of the Great Powers vis-à-vis the annexation when they had not been given an opportunity to formulate it themselves? As a result, Grey earnestly requested Aehrenthal to reconsider his draft which the other Powers had in fact rejected. (107) Having been made aware that his own draft was not comme il faut with Aehrenthal, Grey listened to Cartwright's suggestion that the final paragraph should be rephrased to: "qu'elle (Serbie) se confermera par conséquent à telle décision que les Puissances prendront par rapport à l'Art. XXV du Traité de Berlin." (108) Cartwright expressed the view that this might meet Aehrenthal's requirements, especially if the Powers agreed not to oppose the protocol between Turkey and Austria-Hungary beforehand. (109) Naturally, Cartwright added in a private letter to Grey that the sine qua non for such an agreement would be Austria-Hungary's prior resolution of her dispute with Serbia. (April 1st) At first hesitant Aehrenthal finally agreed the following day to accept Cartwright's proposal. Accordingly he informed the Emperor Franz Joseph that he was sending two drafts to the British government which he hoped would satisfy all parties. The first draft referred to the abrogation of Article XXV of the Treaty of Berlin:

"L'Autriche Hongroie a communiqué aux Cabinets le Protocole signé à Constantinople en dans lequel la Turquie reconnaît le nouvel état de choses créé en Bosnie-Herzegovine par la proclamation de sa majesté impériale et royale apostolique en date du 5 octobre 1908. (Protocole du 26. février.) Les Puissances Signitaires du Traité de Berlin prennant, conformément au principe énoncé à la Conference de Londres de 1879, acte de cette communication et déclarant aboli l'Article XXV du Traité de Berlin." (110)

The second text was yet another draft of the projected

declaration that Serbia would have to make. Aehrenthal rephrased Grey's first paragraph leaving the last two intact:

"La Serbie reconnaît qu'elle n'a pas atteinte dans ses droits par le fait accompli crée en Bosnie-Herzegovine et qu'elle se conformera par conséquent à telle décision que les Puissances prendront par rapport à l'Article XXV du Traité de Berlin. Se rendant aux conseils des Grandes Puissances la Serbie s'engage dès à présent à abandonner l'attitude de protestation et d'opposition qu'elle a observé à l'égard de l'annexion depuis l'automne dernier, et elle s'engage en outre à changer le cours de sa politique pour vivre désormais avec l'Autriche-Hongroie sur le pied d'un bon voisinage." (111)

Aehrenthal said he was willing to endorse this draft provided that the other Signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin make a declaration in accordance with it.

In Cartwright's view Grey's draft and Aehrenthal's reaction to it were of the utmost importance since the peace of Europe might very well depend upon it. (112) Both Grey and Cartwright wanted Aehrenthal to understand that if war were to result then only Austria-Hungary would seem to be responsible for it. Moreover the Monarchy would find itself almost as isolated in Europe as Britain had been at the time of the Boer war. The other nations would see the conflict between Austria-Hungary as yet another example of a brave little David defying an arrogant and bullying Goliath: a scenario which the British Prime Minister Asquith explicitly outlined to Mensdorff. (113) (Ironically, one might add, the Monarchy had been one of the very few powers to support Britain during the South-African war- an irony which was, presumably, not lost on Mensdorff.)

In Hardinge's view none of the Great Powers would be likely to oppose the annexation but Austria-Hungary would have to give evidence of her *bonne foi* by agreeing, for example, to the abrogation of Article XXIX of the Berlin treaty, limiting Montenegro's sovereignty. Hardinge also said Austria-Hungary would have to recognize Bulgaria's independence- which, *prima facie* seems a rather curious statement given that it was widely believed in Britain that the Monarchy had colluded in its declaration in the first place. (114)

Finally, Grey was to say that the guarantees that the Monarchy was seeking from Serbia could only be given once the Great Powers, collectively, were certain that Austria-Hungary did not intend to attack her.

Once again Aehrenthal took exception to the British draft since the words of the second paragraph: "Giving formal assurances...that it (Serbia) will not take unfriendly measures with respect to the latter (Austria-Hungary) were sufficiently vague as to be of little practical value. Moreover, as phrased, Grey's text left the distinct impression that Serbia had been acting defensively rather than provocatively. The Minister took particular exception to the third paragraph which seemed to indicate that the Great Powers would continue to exercise some kind of tutelage or protectorate over Serbia, protecting her from any future Machiavellian designs that the Monarchy might have on her. How otherwise, Aehrenthal asked, could the words: "Austria-Hungary claims no right to infringe the independence and free development of Serbia" be interpreted? (117

In a conversation with Cartwright Aehrenthal went so far as to say that the latest draft was so "naive" that it could easily be believed that the entire text had been composed in the Serbian as opposed to the British Foreign Office. Reference to "the free development of Serbia" could even be construed to mean that far from renouncing her claims to Bosnia-Herzegovina she was merely putting them on hold until a more favourable day. (118) Aehrenthal therefore asked Cartwright to impress upon Grey the absolute necessity of reconsidering his latest draft but Grey stood his ground and both sides seemed to be as far apart as ever.

At this critical impasse the German government entered the equation in a way which was seriously to alarm Grey, Cartwright and indeed the entire British government. Until now Germany had declared that while supporting her Austro-Hungarian ally, she only wanted a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Now in the middle of March she moved to exert intense diplomatic pressure on Russia. On March 21st her ambassador in St. Petersburg

informed the Russian Foreign Minister, Izvolsky, that Germany intended to propose to her ally that the Signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin should be asked to give their unreserved consent to the abrogation of Article XXV on the basis of the Austro-Turkish Protocol of February 26th. Since Austria-Hungary and Turkey had resolved their differences no more needed to be said on the question of Bosnia-Herzegovina. More ominously still, Izvolsky was informed that before Germany made such a proposal Russia would have to declare her position and only a straightforward 'yes or no' would be acceptable. There were to be no qualifications: no 'buts' or 'ifs.' Given Russia's general parlous financial and economic situation let alone military weakness after her defeat by Japan in 1904-5 and the subsequent revolution, Russia was hardly in any position to argue. The possible consequences of defying Germany were too awful to contemplate, as Aehrenthal had confidently and artfully calculated. Reluctantly, Izvolsky preferred to bow before this intense diplomatic pressure rather than the danger of actual force majeure, and he accordingly informed both Vienna and London of Russia's acceptance of the German proposal. The joy and jubilation in Vienna at this development was matched on the other side of the scale by the gloom and humiliation in St. Petersburg. (119)

Izvolsky seemed doomed to drink the cup of humiliation to the full when he appeared compelled to declare that he preferred Aehrenthal's draft Declaration to Serbia rather than that of Grey's, which naturally came as a stunning blow to the British Foreign Secretary. This move by Izvolsky effectively cut the ground from under Grey's feet and he had no option but to concur too. Grey, however, tried desperately to salvage something from the diplomatic debris and was determined that the abrogation of Article XXV would only take place after the dispute between Austria and Serbia was resolved. While concurring with Aehrenthal's draft, Grey insisted on certain changes which the Russian government earnestly requested. (120) Instead of the words "à abandonner l'attitude de protestation et d'opposition qu'elle a observé à l'égard de l'annexion

depuis l'automne dernier" in Paragraph I, Grey wanted to insert "à s'abstenir d'une attitude de protestation et d'opposition dans la question de la Bosnie-Herzégovine, while the phrase "Conformément à ses déclarations pacifiques" in Paragraph II should be replaced by "se fiant aux assurances pacifiques." Finally the last sentence of this paragraph should read "aux frontières de l'Autriche-Hongrie et de la Turquie" rather than "sur son territoire." (121) After all Serbia could hardly be expected to disarm throughout her territory but only, reasonably, where Austria-Hungary had legitimate grounds for concern- on her borders with the Monarchy and Turkey.

In the meantime Aehrenthal was told that Izvolsky was willing to agree to the abrogation of Article XXV of the Treaty of Berlin provided that the other Powers agreed too. He was also informed that the Russian Foreign Minister would accept any Declaration by Serbia that he and the British Foreign secretary cared to make. Izvolsky's cup of humiliation was certainly full to overflowing.

On March 25th Cartwright presented Grey's latest draft to Aehrenthal and was told that even these seemingly innocuous modifications were not acceptable: Serbia must declare without reservation that her attitude vis-à-vis Austria-Hungary was not one that any sovereign state should adopt towards another. A ray of hope, nevertheless, appeared in Aehrenthal's willingness to accept the changes suggested by Grey to his own draft of Paragraph II. Aehrenthal's final remark was that Serbia must make her Declaration in the specific form of a Note addressed to the Austro-Hungarian government and not in the form of a Circular Note addressed to all the Great Powers as co-signatories of the Treaty of Berlin. (122) As a kind of verbal codicil Mensdorff was instructed to tell Grey that under no circumstances was the Serbian government to be told of his (Aehrenthal's) remark that Austria-Hungary had no desire "to impede the normal development of the Serbian army" which had been incorporated in the first draft at Cartwright's suggestion since this was meant for the eyes of the British government alone.

Aehrenthal's revised draft did in fact incorporate two

of Grey's suggestions. While paragraph one remained the same as that of his original draft of March 19th, paragraph two now read:

"Conformément à ses déclarations et confiante dans les intentions pacifiques de l'Autriche-Hongroie la Serbie ramenera son armée à l'état du printemps de 1908 en ce qui concerne son organisation, sa dislocation et son effectif. Elle désarmera et licenciera ses volontaires et ses bandes, et elle empêchera la formation de nouvelles unités irrégulières sur son territoire." (123)

As far as Aehrenthal was concerned this was "his last word on the subject" and Serbia would have to respond in a satisfactory fashion by March 28th. Grey had already been asked by the German government whether Britain were prepared to sanction the abrogation of Article XXV as Russia had done. Grey's answer was that Britain could hardly be expected to do this all the while Austria-Hungary remained in conflict with Serbia. Then again, Grey added, there still remained the question of the abrogation of Article XXIX of the Treaty of Berlin limiting the Sovereignty of Montenegro. When the German ambassador declared that this was a "grave answer", which might very well lead to war, Grey, although seriously alarmed, rejoined that no British government could allow itself to be intimidated in such a fashion since this would encourage other powers to act in the same way in the future. If ever there were a recipe for war, this was it. (124)

Grey's attitude met with scarcely concealed annoyance in Vienna and once again heightened the tension between the two countries. Suspicious as ever, Aehrenthal came to the conclusion that Grey's stance was essentially a subterfuge and a ploy, the sole purpose of which was to avoid giving his consent to the abrogation of Article XXV of the Treaty of Berlin. In Cartwright's view the Austrian Foreign Secretary had been strengthened in this belief by the German ambassador. From Aehrenthal's perspective this postponement of the question of the abrogation deliberately frustrated the Monarchy's attempts to resolve the Bosnian impasse in a satisfactory fashion and was a clear demonstration, if any were needed, of 'Albion perfide' at her worst. (125)

Aehrenthal now let it be known that in view of Grey's unhelpful attitude the Monarchy could no longer be satisfied with Serbia's promise to accept the collective decision of the Great Powers regarding the abrogation of Article XXV since Austria-Hungary had no guarantee what that might be. As a result, Aehrenthal argued, he had no choice but to ask Grey to give his unconditional assent to the Article's abrogation, just as Count Portales had asked Izvolsky in St. Petersburg. Similarly, no equivocation would be acceptable: the answer must simply be, yes or no. Aehrenthal said that the answer could be given to him personally or else to the Imperial German Chancellor, Prince von Bülow. Understandably Cartwright demurred at the prospect of giving an answer to the German Chancellor for that would give the distinct impression, *urbi et orbi*, that Britain was bowing down before German diplomatic pressure just like Russia. Aehrenthal took the point, adding however, that this had never been his intention. He would not mention Bülow again but he must have Britain's reply by March 29th after which all negotiations would be considered at an end. Aehrenthal excused himself by saying that he had no desire to appear inflexible but on that date or the following (March 30th) he needed to make a statement on tariff policy to Serbia since the Commercial Treaty between the two countries was due to expire. (126)

Even before he had received the despatch from Aehrenthal Grey had reluctantly come to the conclusion that he had to accept the Austrian Minister's second draft, and, accordingly on March 26th, he wrote to Russia, France and Italy, saying:

"It is hardly worthwhile to risk the cause of general peace by splitting hairs upon the interpretation to be placed upon certain words which in any case cannot make the Note palatable to the Serbian government, although no doubt they will accept it under the pressure of the Great Powers, whatever its ultimate form might be." (127)

Grey added that it went without saying that he would much have preferred a more conciliatory draft but the most important consideration now was "to cut the ground from under the feet of those who wish to force an ultimatum to be followed by an attack on Serbia." (128)

From Cartwright's reports Grey had been made acutely aware that the powerful war-party in Vienna, headed by the Chief of the General Staff, Conrad von Hötzendorff, was only too keen to settle accounts with Serbia vi et armis. (128) Aehrenthal's final draft reached Grey on March 27th and in accepting it Grey told Mensdorff that Austria-Hungary would do well to be restrained in her reply to Serbia and to avoid giving the impression that somehow the Great Powers had been rebuffed in the course of the negotiations. (129) (Clearly, Grey was concerned to save the collective 'face' of the major European Powers.) The following day (March 28th) Mensdorff handed Aehrenthal Grey's assurance of the British government's acceptance of the abrogation of Article XXV in the form of an aide-mémoire, the text running as follows:

"Après que la Serbie aura adressé à l'Autriche-Hongroie la Note dans les termes rédigés entre le Baron d'

Aehrenthal et l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre et que l'Autriche-Hongroie l'aura acceptée comme satisfaisante, et le gouvernement de sa Majesté sera prêt à donner son assentiment sans réserves à l'abrogation de l'Article XXV du Traité de Berlin, si le Baron d'Aehrenthal en fait la demande directe. Si par hasard la Serbie refuserait d'adresser à l'Autriche-Hongroie la Note que le gouvernement de sa Majesté, de concert avec les autres Puissances va recommander à la Serbie, le gouvernement de Sa Majesté serait également prêt à donner son assentiment à l'abrogation de l'Article XXV, si toutes les Puissances Signitaires, comme il a toute raison de croire, sont prêtes à en faire de même. À condition que la réponse serbe en les termes convenus sera favorablement acceptée comme satisfaisante, et à condition que le Baron d'Aehrenthal n'adressera sa demande pour l'abrogation de l'Article XXV qu'après que la médiation des Puissances à Belgrade aura été efficace ou sera restée sans résultat, l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre est autorisé à donner à Son Excellence les assurances qu'elle lui a demandées. Il est bien entendu que tout ce qui précède dépend de l'assurance verbale que le Baron d'Aehrenthal a donnée récemment à l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre au sujet des changements que le gouvernement austro-hongrois sera prêt à admettre dans l'Article XXIX." (130)

Somewhat later Aehrenthal was to maintain that this format was outlined by Ambassador Cartwright and he had merely agreed to it as a conciliatory gesture. The Austrian Minister said he was grateful to receive Grey's two declarations and once again stated that Britain had no reason to fear an Austro-

Hungarian attack on Serbia, provided that the latter disarm. However, as far as the modification of Article XXIX was concerned this would have to wait upon Serbia's reaction to what he and Grey had decided. In any case, Aehrenthal added, the restrictions on Montenegro's sovereignty could only be abrogated once that state like Serbia had declared its intention to live on good terms with the Monarchy. (132)

When Cartwright handed the aide-mémoire to Aehrenthal he assured him that it was not for Serbia to discuss but merely to declare her acceptance or rejection. The implication was clear: if the Serbs chose to reject it, tant pis pour eux. (133) Without even Russian support the Serbs were scarcely in any position to reject what had in effect become an ultimatum from the Great Powers. The final Note was despatched to Serbia on March 30th and bowing to the inevitable, duly transmitted it together with their acceptance to Aehrenthal the following day. (March 31st)

Serbian bitterness knew no bounds and therefore Aehrenthal was being disingenuous in the extreme when he declared that, with the reception of the Declaration, the formerly good relations between the two countries had been restored. The crisis may indeed have been resolved to the Monarchy's advantage- at least in the short term- but at what cost? The legacy of bitterness and hatred could yet prove to be a pyrrhic victory for Austria-Hungary. (134)

Savouring the fruits of victory, Aehrenthal now declared that ratification of the rescinding of Article XXV could now be done by an exchange of Notes between the Great Powers without the necessity of a conference (135), but at this Grey demurred. Such an exchange of Notes could only occur once the Great Powers had agreed to modify Article XXIX which limited Montenegro's sovereignty. As a result, Aehrenthal had no choice but to wait until the Italian ambassador had informed Grey that the Montenegrin question had been settled. Grey then told Mensdorff that only now could the abrogation of Article XXV be addressed and on April 7th Cartwright duly handed a Note to this effect to Aehrenthal, thus finally bringing the crisis over Bosnia-Herzegovina to an end.

A few days before the end of March (28th) Cartwright penned a general review of the crisis which had so poisoned the atmosphere between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary and heightened the suspicions which each had of the other's intentions. To begin with Cartwright was fulsome in his praise of the Emperor Franz Joseph himself, to whose influence he largely ascribed the peaceful resolution of the crisis, much to the chagrin of the war-party headed by Conrad von Hötendorff. (136) Somewhat curiously, though, Cartwright seemed to be labouring under the impression that the Heir-Apparent, Franz Ferdinand, was a leading member of this coterie, when in fact the complete opposite was true. Franz Ferdinand had been highly supportive of his uncle on this issue at least, however important the differences that existed between them elsewhere. (The reconstructing of the Empire on federal lines and a deep-seated hostility to the Magyars being two prime examples.) Franz Ferdinand was not like his uncle a lover of peace per se but out of a real fear of the possible consequences of war, particularly if Russia were dragged in. Franz Ferdinand was a curious *mélange* of radicalism in domestic affairs with conservatism in foreign, believing that any war with the great Slav colossus of the East could only prove disastrous for the Monarchy, and indeed, as events were to show in 1914, he was absolutely right. Even if the war which Conrad von Hötendorff was continually urging should prove successful, this would not, in his view, solve the Empire's problems but merely exacerbate them. Demands for the annexation of Serbian territory might very well prove irresistible but the incorporation of even more discontented South Slavs into the Monarchy would only add to the Empire's instability.

Perhaps even more curiously, Cartwright displayed a remarkable degree of respect for Aehrenthal in spite of the Austrian Minister's continual denigration and criticism of Great Britain. There is no doubt, however, that Cartwright was echoing the views of many of Aehrenthal's opponents in the British Foreign Office when he said that he was "not only the doyen, but the most important of the continental foreign ministers" (137) While the Habsburg Minister was adamant that

Serbia must be brought to heel even at the cost of war, he was certainly far from wanting it and together with the Emperor and Franz Ferdinand continually acted as a brake upon the belligerency of the General Staff, led by Conrad von Hötzendorff. Wars are costly affairs both in terms of loss of human life and the economic and financial damage done to the states involved. (138) Whatever the shortcomings of the Monarchy might be if war were to come, Aehrenthal was right in his calculations that Russia was even less in a position to take up the gauntlet on Serbia's behalf, given her economic weakness and military unpreparedness. If Aehrenthal can be accused of playing for broke or 'va banque' in casino terminology, then he had 'an ace up his sleeve' in the form of the unconditional support of the greatest military power in Europe- the German Empire. While Russia might have contemplated war against Austria-Hungary alone, an Austria backed by Germany was not an option.

While Aehrenthal was 'spot on' vis-à-vis Russia's intrinsic weakness at this time, he was completely wrong in his assessment of British policy and intentions. Aehrenthal's suspicions to the contrary, there is no evidence that Britain was conspiring against Austria-Hungary at Constantinople, let alone trying to foment a war between the Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire or the Monarchy and Serbia. From the very beginning Grey's position had been that in annexing Bosnia-Herzegovina, Austria-Hungary had violated a solemnly agreed international treaty and as a consequence, if she were 'to get away with it', the very foundations of European diplomacy would be destroyed. If the Treaty of Berlin could be regarded as 'merely a small scrap of paper'- to use the Kaiser's later unhappy phrase in 1914- then any strong power was effectively given carte blanche to ride roughshod over its weaker neighbours: a veritable bellum omnium contra omnes might very well then ensue. Grey was not intriguing against the Monarchy, as the Austrian Minister believed, but merely indicating that as the offended party Turkey had legitimate grounds for complaint and a right to compensation. Whatever the reality of Austria-Hungary's 30 year old occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the two provinces were still technically and legally part of the Ottoman Empire and no manoeuvrings, ingenuous or otherwise,

could alter this basic fact. Moreover, Austria-Hungary's unilateral act threatened to destabilize the Young Turk government at Constantinople that the British government was pledged to support. Throughout the crisis, Grey had, in any case, only been thinking in terms of financial compensation for Turkey and at no time had he considered a military attack on Austria-Hungary by the Ottomans a viable option, desirable or otherwise. Again Aehrenthal's suspicions that Britain was the instigator of Turkey's very effective boycott of Austro-Hungarian goods were equally unfounded. The fact that Grey should regard Turkey's action as a legitimate and clever means of retaliation was a different matter entirely. Aehrenthal's pique, in Grey's view, stemmed purely and simply from the fact that he had failed to achieve his aims without any serious repercussions. In this he had discovered like Macbeth that rarely 'does the deed trammel up the consequences.' The French too have an apt saying: 'Cet animal est méchant- quand on l'attaque, il se défend!' Austria-Hungary had struck at Turkey and Turkey had struck back.

Grey had also made it clear to Mensdorff that it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain the old traditional ties of friendship between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain now that Britain's relations with Russia were much warmer- especially when the interests of Austria-Hungary and Russia came into conflict in the Balkans. Grey was in fact looking to even better relations with Russia now that potential areas of conflict such as Persia had been resolved by the delimitation of respective spheres of British and Russian influence. As a consequence, Grey had told Mensdorff, Britain could not remain indifferent to the claims and interests of Russia's protégé in the Balkans, Serbia. This was in spite of the fact that Britain had no direct interest in the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia per se. It is, one might add en passant, that it is an unfortunate fact of political and diplomatic life that the perceived need to court the friendship of one power may lead *pari passu* to antagonizing another without there being any malign intention

to do so. As it happened Grey had very little personal sympathy for the Serbs and had stressed that Serbia could only reasonably expect some kind of financial or economic compensation and must eschew any hope of territorial. At no time did Grey give Serbia cause to believe that Britain would seriously support a Serbian demand for territory. If Grey did not have much time for the Serbs he, nevertheless, did not want to see them humiliated diplomatically, and therefore he placed great importance on the wording of the Declaration that Serbia would be required to make to Austria-Hungary. Once again, though, Grey did have an ulterior motive- to avoid humiliating Russia. The humiliation of a small state like Serbia was one thing but the humiliation of one of Europe's Great Powers was in a different category entirely. Throughout the crisis, however, Grey made it plain that Russia could only count on Britain's diplomatic support: the Tsarist state could not count on Britain's military support in the event of actual war with Austria-Hungary, whether Germany intervened or not. If Russia's ally, France, was scarcely willing to go to war for the sake of Serbia, it stood to reason that Britain would be even less inclined to do so. After all France had a definite alliance with Russia while Britain had only an entente or understanding. Nevertheless, Austria-Hungary's actions had given rise to grave suspicions in the British Foreign Office, not only with regard to Serbia but also as to her ultimate intentions in the Near East. More importantly, questions were being asked as to how far Austria-Hungary was acting on her own initiative and how far on the direction and guidance of her ally, Germany? Was Austria-Hungary merely the 'cat's paw' of an increasingly aggressive and assertive German Empire? Aehrenthal angrily and indignantly rejected such accusations but British diplomats like Sir Fairfax Cartwright became less and less inclined to believe him. Like Lady Macbeth, Cartwright thought that Aehrenthal "doth protest too much" and as the French again say: "Qui s'excuse, s'accuse,"

In one respect Grey did achieve a victory of sorts. After Izvolsky had been compelled by Germany to recognize without reservations the abrogation of Article XXV and the definitive

annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Grey was able to insist that Aehrenthal not seek the ratification of this move by the other Signatory Powers until Serbia had either signalled her acceptance or rejection of the Note that he and Aehrenthal had drafted.

While it is clear that Austria-Hungary ultimately achieved her principal aims, nevertheless, it was largely thanks to Grey's persistency that Turkey at least received some financial compensation for the loss of her sovereign rights in the two provinces, however nominal they might have been. It was also thanks to the British Foreign Secretary that the Note to Serbia was not as humiliating as Aehrenthal originally intended, and that Montenegro had the restrictions on her sovereignty lifted. There could be no question that the diplomatic tussle between Austria-Hungary (and indirectly her ally, Germany) and Great Britain had dramatically soured the political atmosphere between the two countries, and relations were never to be the same again. As Count Tarnowski, the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires in London explicitly recognized:

"The feeling that is current here (England) today 'about us' does not arise directly out of the crisis. It is rather an inevitable corollary of the only consequences of the annexation that still persists, namely the 'new impressions' that have been spread abroad in this country 'about us.' To define the 'altered judgement' that has taken the place of that which was formerly entertained of Austria-Hungary before the crisis is only possible in a few words by saying that if before we were looked upon as a power with whom it was inconceivable that Great Britain could go to war, today we are regarded as a possible enemy who in the event of war would support the only power with whom Great Britain seriously contemplates the possibility of conflict- Germany." (139)

CHAPTER V

THE BALKAN WARS (1912-13)

There can be little doubt that the crisis over Bosnia-Herzegovina heralded a fundamental sea-change in the relations between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, as Count Tarnowski had reported to his government on May 7th 1909.(1) In spite of Aehrenthal's disclaimers, as has been seen, the Monarchy was now being seen as the extended arm of the Wilhelmstrasse, playing a pivotal role in Germany's preceived attempts to dominate the Near East. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that this new mood of suspicion should be further heightened by news from Vienna that the Habsburg government was planning to substantially increase Austria-Hungary's navy by building a powerful squadron of ocean-going Dreadnoughts. Since this coincided with the fact that Germany was already engaged in a large scale programme of naval expansion and pointedly refusing to come to a realistic *modus vivendi* with Great Britain on the subject, the worst fears of the British Foreign Office and government seemed confirmed.

Of particular significance in this matter was the role of the Austrian Heir Apparent, Franz Ferdinand, who emerged as a determined advocate of naval expansion- something which no British statesman could afford to ignore. As a result shortly after the resolution of the Annexation Crisis at the end of April 1909, Cartwright asked Aehrenthal point blank whether the creation of such a fleet was a serious and practical proposition given that it far outweighed Austria-Hungary's need for coastal defence. Aehrenthal was equally candid in his reply, saying that the reports were indeed true but he was in no position to give any details about the actual number of ships to be constructed since the money to finance them had not yet been agreed by the Austrian and Hungarian parliaments.

Both government parliaments were notoriously reluctant to fund either the army or the navy, particularly in the case of Hungary as far as the navy was concerned. Aehrenthal said that he fully understood the objections of the Magyars but while he conceded that the Monarchy was mainly a land-power, and would remain so, nevertheless, he stressed that the Empire

had a long Dalmatian coast to protect and considerable commercial interests in the mediterranean to defend. Therefore, Aehrenthal argued, it was hardly unreasonable, domestic criticism and foreign concern notwithstanding, if the Monarchy sought the most effective modern means to do so. The Austrian Minister then went on to express his surprise (feigned or otherwise) that such a naval programme could "have caused such excitement in England" since the Monarchy was hardly in the same league, from a naval point of view, as the other Great Powers, and the planned expansion only represented in any case "a slight increase in the strength of her navy." Aehrenthal was only too aware of what was really on Cartwright's mind and hastened to reassure him that the Dreadnoughts "would not be built with an intention of strengthening the German fleet under any circumstances." Consequently "what Austria-Hungary was about to do need cause no alarm whatever in England." (2) However suspicions once aroused were not easily allayed and as Count Tarnowski reported to Vienna in May many members of the British Foreign Office were convinced that the projected Dreadnoughts represented "a concealed addition to the German fleet." (3) Sir Eyre Crowe, in particular, the Senior Clerk at the Foreign Office and later, from 1912, the Assistant Under-Secretary of State, was not moved by Aehrenthal's assurances. Although he had a German mother and had married a German, Crowe was highly suspicious of Imperial Germany and was convinced that sooner or later Britain and Germany would come into conflict. In Crowe's view the interests of the two empires were mutually antagonistic and not amenable to compromise. In fact, he argued, were Britain to make any attempt to accommodate Germany's ambitions, this would merely be construed as weakness in Berlin and whet Germany's appetite for even greater concessions. After perusing Cartwright's despatch from Vienna, Crowe had the following to say:

"In considering the strength of foreign navies it is not sufficient to take into account only the present intention real or asserted of the governments owning such navies. In this particular case it may be true that no hostility to England is contemplated,

but in view of the existence of the Triple Alliance it cannot be overlooked that Austria-Hungary, whether she likes it or not, may find herself engaged in a war against us. The essence of the two power standard is, I take it, that it wisely eschews the almost impossible task of determining whether a particular power may or may not be opposed to us in war and seeks safety in the abstract and general principle of superiority over any numerically possible combination of two powers."(4)

Sir Edward Grey seconded Crowe on this point and added, significantly:

"Whatever Aehrenthal may say, there is jubilation in Germany, where some papers consider the Austrian note as an answer to the offer of our colonies."(5)

Here, of course, Grey was referring to the offer of the Dominions such as Australia, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand to place their armed forces at the disposal of the British government in the event of any European war.

Both Aehrenthal and the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in London, Count Mensdorff, were unable to convince Cartwright that Austria-Hungary's naval plans represented no conceivable threat to Britain either in the present or the future. Hardinge too remained highly sceptical when Mensdorff said to him that the very idea that "another power(i.e. Germany) was behind the naval construction programme was ridiculous."(6) No matter what Austrian statesmen might say- whether of the somewhat devious school like Aehrenthal or the honest and sincere like Mensdorff- the British Foreign Office was convinced that the Wilhelmstrasse was the fons et origo of the Monarchy's plans, and as a result the Habsburg Empire, even malgré lui, had to be considered a potential enemy and a serious one at that.(7)

Whatever the explanation, Austria-Hungary's ocean-going ambitions were to cast a long shadow over subsequent attempts by statesmen in both countries to forge a better *modus vivendi*, on par with the traditional warm relations of the past.

At the beginning of July Cartwright reported to Grey that Aehrenthal seemed to be adopting a more conciliatory tone by admitting that his behaviour during the Bosnian crisis- and indeed his Bosnian policy per se- had been largely responsible for the heightened international tension and the subsequent

estrangement of Britain and France from the Monarchy- as well, of course, Russia.

While not exactly saying 'mea culpa, mea maxima culpa', Aehrenthal now declared that he sincerely regretted the bad atmosphere that had been created between the two countries and he hoped that the British government would believe him when he said that he wanted to forge closer relations with Britain and to ensure that Austria-Hungary had a greater degree of independence from Germany. Aehrenthal then suggested that there would be no better way of demonstrating this desire for more friendly relations than if the British King Edward VII would agree to visit the Emperor Franz Joseph at his hunting-lodge at Ischl not far from the Spa town of Marienbad which the King intended to journey to in the very near future. Such a visit would, Aehrenthal said, be welcomed by every member of the Austro-Hungarian government and it would be tangible proof in diplomatic circles that both Austria-Hungary and Great Britain wanted to put the dissension of the last year behind them. (8)

Ironically, though, even this ostensibly auspicious move by Aehrenthal was to backfire, since he was later to claim that the initial impetus for the visit came from the British side- from Cartwright. Thus, exactly who had broached "the personal and confidential question" (9) of whether the Emperor would welcome a face to face meeting around the time of his birthday on August 18th became yet another source of friction and irritation between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain.

Aehrenthal went on to say that he would raise the matter with the Emperor as soon as he could. Speaking personally he thought that Franz Joseph would be glad to see him, although were it not possible on Edward's part then he was equally sure that the Emperor would not be offended. According to Aehrenthal the British ambassador then suggested that Count Mensdorff, the Monarchy's ambassador in London, should be formally instructed to ask Edward if he would like to go to Ischl- a proposal if acted upon would, of course, be tantamount to an invitation. At this suggestion, however, Aehrenthal adopted a non-committal attitude but at his actual meeting

with Franz Joseph on July 16th, the Austrian Minister actually urged the Emperor to reject the idea.(10) Subsequently, Edward VII told Mensdorff that owing to the strained relations between the two countries as a result of the Bosnia-Herzegovina question the the Monarchy's naval plans it would be politically impossible for him to ask for a formal invitation and the initiative for such a visit would have to be seen to becoming from Austria-Hungary. There was also, the British King added, another very important consideration to be taken into account- the reaction from Germany. Were the visit to take place then every effort must be made to ensure that Berlin did not view the matter as an attempt by Britain to drive a wedge between the two Central Powers while the Kaiser was away in Norway: A case of while the cat was away the mice will play.(11) As it happened, the entire issue was to remain academic since Franz Joseph took Aehrenthal's advice and decided not to issue an invitation. Consequently Edward went directly to the spas at Marienbad. However, as an act of courtesy he despatched a special messenger to Ischl to wish the Emperor a happy birthday- a gesture which went down well in Vienna. This being said, Aehrenthal was, nevertheless, being less than honest when he claimed that an actual visit would have been of little importance and the message itself was sufficient to "dispel the prevalent belief" that the previous meeting between Franz Joseph and Edward at Ischl in 1908 had been far from cordial. Moreover, neither the British King nor Cartwright were to forget that Aehrenthal seemed to be reverting to his customary Machiavellian stance by first encouraging a royal visit and then repudiating the very fact that he had done so.(12)

Further cause for disension came when Sir Edward Grey made a speech in the House of Commons on July 22nd. Quoting from a letter that the then Liberal Prime Minister William Gladstone had written to the Austro-Hungarian ambassador Count Károlyi regarding the Treaty of Berlin which had sanctioned Austria's occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878, Grey emphasized Gladstone's words:

"Your Excellency is now good enough to assure us that your government has no desire whatever to extend to or add to the rights acquired under the Treaty of Berlin and that any such extension would be actually prejudicial to Austria-Hungary." (13)

Even though Grey made a point of saying that these remarks did not appertain to Austria-Hungary's present rights and obligations, Aehrenthal was decidedly peeved and asked for clarification of Gladstone's letter, especially as he knew that Károlyi had given Gladstone his absolute assurance in 1880 that Austria-Hungary had no intention of advancing on Salonika, British suspicions to the contrary notwithstanding. Nothing in fact had been said on the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina. (14) Grey rejoined by saying that he was only too willing to reassure the Minister that he did not take the letter to refer to the recently annexed provinces "but only to an advance beyond these provinces." (15) Aehrenthal said he was prepared to accept Grey's explanation and assurance but there was little doubt that the affair had left yet another chill in Anglo-Austrian relations.

In all probability, Grey regretted the deterioration of relations between Britain and the Monarchy more than Aehrenthal did. Curiously, the latter never seemed to appreciate the importance of Britain in European affairs, and presumably this was because Britain was essentially a naval power with world-wide rather than purely continental interests. (16)

There was one real bright spot in Austro-British relations at this time and this hinged on the personal popularity of the British ambassador in Vienna, Sir Fairfax Cartwright. Cartwright was an extremely convivial soul and his warm-heartedness and genuine bonhomie made him a welcome guest at every social gathering. For his part, Cartwright found the 'Gemütlichkeit' of the Austrian capital very much to his taste.

Cartwright was not a man prone to vindictiveness, so when early in 1909 he became aware of the extreme pressure that Aehrenthal was experiencing from his enemies both at home and in Berlin, he wrote to Grey expressing his concern. Hearing this the British Foreign Secretary decided that this was an

opportune moment to make a conciliatory gesture towards Aehrenthal. Consequently, he instructed Cartwright to tell the Emperor that the British government was concerned at the level of domestic and foreign (i.e. German) criticism levelled at the Foreign Minister and that HM government hoped that Aehrenthal still enjoyed the Emperor's personal confidence.(17) This concern on the part of Grey seems to have moved even the normally cool and dispassionate Foreign Minister and he, in his turn, instructed Cartwright to give Grey his personal thanks, remarking that he was glad that the Annexation Crisis had not irreparably damaged the relations between the two countries. Such a dénouement would have been quite unforgiveable.(18) Although relations were to improve considerably over the next two years they were never to return to the former warm footing. The focal point of discussion was now to centre upon the mutual antipathy and suspicion that existed between the Monarchy and Russia in the Balkans.

Throughout the second half of 1909 Russia was visibly smarting from the diplomatic rebuff and humiliation that she had suffered from Austria-Hungary and her ally Germany. The bad atmosphere that existed between the two countries was further compounded by the deep, personal animosity that existed between the two Foreign Ministers, Aehrenthal and Izvolsky. Izvolsky was convinced that Aehrenthal was guilty of *mauvaise foi* and had deliberately deceived him, leading him to believe that, were Russia not to oppose the annexation, Austria-Hungary, for its part, would support an amendment to the Straits Convention, allowing the passage of Russian warships through the Dardenelles. As far as Izvolsky was concerned this had been the verbal and tacit *quid pro quo* agreed at their meeting in Moravia. Nevertheless, Aehrenthal was anxious to improve relations with Russia. The Tsarist Empire was, after all, still a Great Power and her hostility could have undesirable consequences for the Monarchy. In this respect Aehrenthal hoped that Britain might be able to act as a mediator between the two countries. Cartwright reported the Austrian Foreign Minister's wish to Grey on June 10th(19) but while the Foreign Secretary was immensely relieved to hear of Aehrenthal's conciliatory

attitude he had no desire to become too closely embroiled for fear of failure and possibly incurring the wrath of both parties. Grey was also worried about the reaction from Germany that might very well view any attempt at mediation as yet another attempt by 'Albion perfide' to drive a wedge between the two Triple Alliance partners, just like Edward VII's projected visit to Ischl. Consequently, Grey was of the mind that the two empires would have to resolve their differences "but without entangling ourselves" and this would be facilitated by Aehrenthal and Izvolsky "setting aside their personal differences" and "adopting a policy of self-abrogation." Grey added that he had grave doubts about both of them but if he had to choose he would choose Aehrenthal because he "was the cleverer of the two." (20) A sentiment which was to be echoed by Hardinge in a letter to Cartwright on October 4th 1909: "I would sooner trust Aehrenthal than Izvolsky, and I prefer Aehrenthal because he is much the more clever." (21) Given Aehrenthal's recent behaviour over Bosnia-Herzegovina and the question of Bulgarian independence, as well as Edward's remark that he would never trust the Austrian Foreign Minister again this seems a strikingly odd assessment by both British statesmen. It certainly does not say much for Izvolsky.

In spite of the frosty atmosphere between the two countries some kind of modus vivendi was reached between them by the beginning of 1910. Both Russia and Austria-Hungary agreed to respect the status quo in the Balkans. At this juncture, however, around Russia's suggestion that the other Great Powers make a similar declaration, further irritation between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain was to arise. While Grey welcomed the idea, Aehrenthal, much to his surprise, rejected it out of hand. Clearly Aehrenthal wanted it to be understood that any easing of tension with Russia by no means implied that Austria-Hungary was prepared to make any more concessions to her. (22) To Cartwright's mind any lasting and meaningful improvements in relations between the two empires would only come about when either one or the other Foreign Ministers resigned or was dismissed. And, indeed, relations only substantially improved when Izvolsky resigned in the autumn of 1910. (23)

Aehrenthal was also irritated by two other incidents at this time. One concerned the visit of the Serbian king Peter to St. Petersburg while the other involved a highly personal attack on him by the British journal, the Fortnightly Review. Naturally, the latter had a direct bearing on Anglo-Austrian relations. To begin with Aehrenthal let it be known that he took grave exception to such attacks which could only set back attempts to improve relations between the two countries. Later, however, Aehrenthal seemed to perform a complete volte face by saying that he personally set little store by such articles and that it would not affect his attitude vis-à-vis Great Britain. (24)

Of greater consequence, however, for both Aehrenthal and Grey, at this time, was the attitude to be taken towards Greece and Turkey, locked as they were in mutually bitter recriminations over Crete and Macedonia. While both statesmen were anxious to prevent a war, they differed on how best to preserve the peace.

THE QUESTION OF CRETE. Unlike the so-called Four Protecting Powers- Russia, Italy, France and Britain- who exercised a quasi protectrate over Greece, the Monarchy was not directly involved in Cretan affairs. As a consequence, Aehrenthal rejected the suggestion from Grey that Austria-Hungary should take part in the drafting of a definitive statute for the island which was to be presented to Turkey at the end of 1909. Aehrenthal limited himself to saying that he fully supported the position of his predecessor, Goluchowski, which was that Austria-Hungary would only become involved if there were a fundamental change in the island's status. However, he added, that he saw no reason why the Monarchy should object to any administrative changes that were being proposed as long as all four powers were in agreement. Naturally, it went without saying that Turkey as the suzerain power would have to agree too. (25) In spite of Aehrenthal's unwillingness to become directly involved he went on to suggest in February 1910 that the four protecting powers should reoccupy the island since the conflict between Greece and Turkey had taken an even more dangerous turn with the appearance of deputies from Crete in the Greek National

Assembly in Athens. Once again, though, he explicitly rejected and direct involvement by Austria-Hungary.(26) Grey took considerable exception to Aehrenthal's attitude but there was little to be done about it. However, the pressure of the four protecting powers, Russia, France, Italy and Britain was sufficient per se to compel the Cretan government of Prince George- the second son of the Greek king- to recognize the Ottomans' continuing suzerainty over the island. This was by no means the end of the conflict since the Turks continued to boycott Greek goods. As a result Grey now proposed that all the Signatory Powers- six in number of which Austria-Hungary was one- should approach Turkey and ask her to rescind the boycott but once again Aehrenthal declined to become involved. In the Austrian Minister's view such 'persuasion' could very well be construed as unwarranted pressure and interference and might lead to the overthrow of the Ottoman government by an angry public at Constantinople. For Austria-Hungary stability at Constantinople was of paramount importance since any hint of weakness would merely encourage the predatory ambitions of the other Balkan States. In any case, Aehrenthal argued, war between Greece and Turkey was unlikely and even if it were to occur the Great Powers would soon ensure it came to an end.

When Grey received Aehrenthal's reply he said he was somewhat baffled by the Austrian Minister's attitude, since unlike Austria-Hungary Britain had no particular interest in the Balkans but the Monarchy had every interest in peace and stability there. Grey said together with the three other Protecting Powers he would try and make "Turkey moderate and reasonable" and if necessary hold Crete in trust for the Porte by carrying out a military occupation of the island" but Britain "would not become embroiled in a wider conflict."(28) If Turkey should attack Greece in Thessaly or elsewhere this would be "a totally different proposition" but even then Britain would only act in concert with all the six Signatory Powers to the agreement of 1898, Austria-Hungary included. (29)

Aehrenthal remained quite unmoved by Grey's strictures and merely reiterated his opposition to any involvement by the Monarchy. This did not, however, mean that the Cretan

Question could not be resolved, as Grey seemed to imply. Just for the record, Aehrenthal added, the Monarchy had always urged the Turks to adopt a moderate policy but it was not Turkey that was the chief problem. As far as the Monarchy was concerned it was the policies pursued by Prince George, the High Commissioner in Crete that had so antagonized the Turks as to create the crisis in the first place. After reiterating the point that it was solely a matter for the four Protecting Powers to resolve, Aehrenthal concluded sharply by saying that Austria-Hungary was only too aware of her geographical situation and hardly needed to be reminded of the fact by a British Foreign Secretary. It was because of her very situation that the Monarchy had to pursue "an especially cautious and calculated policy"- fortiter in re, suaviter in modo, so to speak- since this was the sine qua non for the Monarchy's continuing existence as a Great Power.(30) As it happened, Aehrenthal's assessment of the situation proved more accurate than Grey's for the Ottomans did refrain from attacking Greece.

The controversy over Crete was also used by the Austrian Foreign Minister to make the point that while the Monarchy was reverting to its traditional, conservative policy, both Grey and the British government in general should be aware that Austria-Hungary intended to hold fast to her alliance with Germany and no illusions should be entertained on that score. However, he could not emphasize strongly enough that the alliance between the two countries was not nor would it be one of subordination or subservience of Austria-Hungary to her German ally but an alliance of equals- in spite of what certain elements in the British Foreign Office might think. However, once Aehrenthal had 'got this off his chest', he then said that the Monarchy was genuinely and deeply concerned about the bad atmosphere that existed between Great Britain and her ally and nothing would please the Austro-Hungarian government more than to see an improvement in the relations between them. For there was little doubt in his mind that the hostility between Britain and Germany was at the root of all the suspicions entertained by Britain about Austro-Hungarian policy and, therefore, it followed that any improvement in relations would *pari passu* dispel suspicion and restore the old ties of friendship between

Habsburg Empire and Great Britain.

On this occasion, at least, Aehrenthal seems to have foresworn his former disingenuous self- a fact which can clearly be seen from the genuine anxiety that he exhibited in his conversations with the German Emperor and Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, in February 1910. Unlike Imperial Germany, Aehrenthal said, Austria-Hungary had no Weltpolitik that could conceivably come into conflict with Great Britain and, therefore, it followed that the basic cause of the mistrust between the latter and the Monarchy stemmed from Britain's fear of the ultimate ends of Germany's ambitions in both Europe and the wider world. Consequently, if Germany could allay these fears by some kind of rapprochement with Britain this would rebound to the direct advantage of the Monarchy. (31)

The following year, in 1911, Aehrenthal again became alarmed by increased tension between Germany and France over Morocco, knowing as he did that the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France in 1906 would ensure that France had the support of the island empire. Indeed, at the end of May, Sir Edward Grey told Count Metternich, the German ambassador quite categorically "that the agreement between England and France imposed on England the obligation to support France" in any matter concerning Morocco. (32) When the German government despatched a gunboat-'The Panther'- to Agadir, ostensibly to support the Sultan against French claims in Morocco both Aehrenthal and Grey were alarmed at this raising of the stakes and the impact this might have on relations between Austria-Hungary, Germany's chief ally and Britain. Britain's real fear was that Germany intended to establish a naval base on the Atlantic coast which would be a direct challenge to the Royal Navy's command of the seas, particularly the approach to the Mediterranean through the Straits of Gibraltar. Although the crisis was ultimately defused by France's cession of part of the French Congo to the German colony of Cameroon (Kamerun) in West Africa in return for Germany's agreement to give France a free hand in Morocco, the situation had almost led to war. More relevant to our purposes here, while Austria-Hungary had dutifully offered Germany her diplomatic support it was noticeably less than enthusiastic and indeed Aehrenthal made a point of personally assuring Cartwright that the Monarchy

fully understood that Britain was duty bound by a treaty actually concluded in 1904 to support France. Cartwright, for his part, seems to have fully appreciated the delicacy of Aehrenthal's position on this issue.(33)

THE QUESTION OF TRIPOLI. At the end of September 1911 both Grey and Aehrenthal found themselves facing a similar diplomatic quandary when Italy invaded the last remaining Ottoman province in North Africa-Tripoli- and then proceeded to annex it. Although Italy was an acknowledged member of the Triple Alliance Grey did not wish to drive her into an even closer embrace with Germany- if that were possible. Moreover, just as Britain had recognized French claims to Morocco so Britain had agreed by a treaty of 1902 to look favourably upon any moves that Italy might make vis-à-vis Tripoli. In a letter of February that year, Lord Lansdowne, Grey's predecessor at the Foreign Office, had written to the British ambassador in Rome, Lord Currie, saying:

"If at any time an alteration of the status quo (in Tripoli) should become inevitable it would be their (British) government's object that such alteration should not be one of a nature to operate to the detriment of Italian interests and indeed should be in accordance with them."(34)

This commitment on Britain's part set somewhat uneasily with the island Empire's status as a multi-national concern with millions of Moslem subjects, particularly in India, and as such she could hardly afford to be seen taking an overtly hostile attitude towards Ottoman Turkey.

Austria-Hungary had a similar dilemma but for different reasons. As a member of the Triple Alliance Italy was, technically, the Monarchy's ally and therefore she could reasonably expect- at least in public- a sympathetic attitude on Austria-Hungary's part- not that Aehrenthal had any illusions about Italy's value as an ally. It was common knowledge in Vienna that the general feeling in Rome was that 'Italy has no enemy in Europe save her Austro-Hungarian ally.' Italy's well-known designs on Austrian territory, principally Trieste, Istria and the South Tyrol (the so-called Italia

Irredenta) were continual sources of friction and tension between the two allies. Understandably, however, Aehrenthal did not want to alienate Italy completely for fear that she might then seek a closer relationship with France and Russia. The Austrian Minister's problems were further compounded by the fact that while he wanted to keep Italy on side diplomatically, the war-party in Vienna, headed as usual by the Chief of the General Staff, Conrad von Hötzendorff was urging a preventive war against Italy, believing that war between the two nominal allies was inevitable and it would be better for Austria-Hungary to strike first. Fortunately, once again, the Emperor took Aehrenthal's part, although he admitted that he shared Conrad von Hötzendorff's fears about Italy's reliability. "It is probable", Franz Joseph observed, "even probable that such a war may come about; but it will not be waged until Italy attacks us." (35)

Publicly Aehrenthal maintained a stoic silence but in private he was furious. To attack the Ottoman Empire at this juncture risked destabilizing the entire Near East, since the Balkan States, particularly Serbia- the Monarchy's *bête noire* par excellence- might very well conclude that this was the ideal moment to seize the remainder of Turkey's European possessions. In spite of Turkey's manifold weakness as 'the Sick Man of Europe', its maintenance against the predatory designs of the Balkan powers was an essential ingredient in Aehrenthal's calculations- his own actions in 1908 notwithstanding. Thus both the Foreign Secretary and the Foreign Minister found themselves caught on the horns of a dilemma. Neither Grey nor Aehrenthal were able to prevent war; in fact, the Italian Prime Minister, Giovanni Giolitti, did not even deign to inform the Monarchy of his intentions but merely presented her with "a fait accompli." (36) As the war developed in Tripoli and Cyrenaica both statesmen became increasingly anxious but still they refrained from any public criticism of Italy's actions, in spite of Turkey's urgent pleas for them to do so. The Russian Foreign Minister summed up the British attitude as follows:

"In England they are beginning to be uneasy, as they fear there that in the event of disagreement between Italy and France, Italy will again become more closely involved with the Triple Alliance. In this case Tripoli might, in Italian hands, become a convenient naval base of operations for the Triple Alliance in the mediterranean." (37)

The actual annexation of Tripoli by Italy on November 6th, 1911, still led to no public pronouncement by either Grey or Aehrenthal, although, in private, both men agreed Italy was in flagrant violation of her treaty commitments. Since they were unable to prevent the actual outbreak of war both statesmen now focused on ensuring that the conflict did not spread wider and thus damaging the economic and commercial interests of Britain and Austria-Hungary. Joint pressure from Grey and Aehrenthal did succeed in dissuading Italy from a projected assault on the Dardanelles after she had failed to defeat the Turks and their Arab allies in North Africa. It went without saying that this important maritime route from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean would have been grievously affected by any Italian operations in this vicinity, directly imperilling both British and Austro-Hungarian commercial interests. (38)

Even though Italy was the Monarchy's ally, the last thing Aehrenthal wanted to see was trouble so close to home- in the Empire's 'back-yard', so to speak. Indeed, this ran the risk of Italy establishing a permanent foothold in an area of supreme strategic significance to Austria-Hungary. Unwilling to act directly himself Aehrenthal tried to 'pass the buck' to Grey urging him to adopt a more forceful tone vis-à-vis Italy, but this Grey refused to do. Neither Turkey nor Italy were prepared to accept mediation at the hands of Grey or anyone else for that matter and would clearly reject any attempt to induce them to do so. Once again Britain's economic and commercial interests were uppermost in Grey's mind and it was reasonable for him to ask that if Austria-Hungary, Italy's ally were unwilling to act, why should he? (39)

However, as the war dragged on into the New Year, Grey approached the new Austrian Foreign Minister, Count Berchtold (Aehrenthal having died from Leukaemia on February 17th)

with a suggestion that an official *démarche* be made to Italy asking her to refrain from any military and naval operations at the Dardanelles "et dans ces parages." (40) Unless Italy were to give such an assurance it was quite conceivable that the Turks would respond by closing the Straits altogether by sowing mines. Berchtold proved to be more than receptive but since only France was willing to accept the proposal the idea had to be quietly dropped. However, Grey did not despair and pursued the matter on his own initiative which had the desired effect. The Turks agreed to listen and promised to desist from laying mines- a result which brought forth a warm commendation from Berchtold. (41)

Four months later in June 1912 a diplomatic reception was held in Vienna and the proposal was raised that a conference of all the interested parties be held to resolve the conflict between the two states. (Turkey and Italy.) However it proved impossible to agree on a compromise formula acceptable to all sides and Berchtold was forced to dismiss the idea as pointless. The war thus dragged on and the Italians still unable to defeat the Turks in Tripoli switched their line of attack. Having promised not to attack the Ottomans in either Albania or the Adriatic, "knowing that"- in the words of the Italian Prime Minister, Giolitti-"the militarist element in Vienna would try to profit thereby", Italy now invaded the Dodecanese Islands off the south-west coast of Asia Minor. Somewhat artfully, Giolitti claimed that the Italian occupation was only "temporary", thus precluding the Monarchy "from claiming compensation" under Article 7 of the Triple Alliance. (42) Berchtold felt obliged to go through the motions of issuing a protest but he had little choice but to accept Italy's action as *fait accompli*. With this development both Berchtold and Grey despaired at any further attempt at mediation.

Both to Cartwright in Vienna and his ambassador Mensdorff in London, Berchtold reiterated Aehrenthal's fear that Italy's actions were undermining the balance of power in the Balkans and whetting the predatory ambitions of states like Serbia. The danger was, from the Monarchy's point of view, that Serbia might very well emerge as '*tertius gaudens*' and since her aims were

not limited solely to Ottoman territory but involved that of the Monarchy too, Austria-Hungary had reasonable cause for alarm. Grey said that he fully appreciated Berchtold's anxiety but had to stress that Britain had no desire to become embroiled in an area of peripheral interest to her.

Already in December 1911, when Aehrenthal was clearly dying, Cartwright had reported that although Aehrenthal's overriding aim was to preserve the Balkan status quo, he was astute enough to realise that this might prove impossible. As a consequence a 'plan B' might very well be needed in order to safeguard the Monarchy's interests in the event of Turkey's sudden collapse. Taking this fact into consideration, Cartwright posed the following question to Grey:

"Would it not be well for Great Britain, France and Russia to exchange views with regard to these matters and either come to terms with Aehrenthal as to a possible joint action of the Powers in the Balkans in the event of trouble arising there, or to form a plan of action of their own to oppose that which will be pursued by Austria-Hungary in the event of a Near East crisis?" (43)

Grey in fact balked at this suggestion, saying that in his view it would be a serious mistake for Britain to be seen taking the initiative in "Opposing Austria-Hungary in the Balkans." For one this would appear visibly at odds with Britain's claim that the area was of peripheral interest to her. It would be much better if Russia, that was more closely involved, should draw up a definite series of proposals and then approach Britain. (44) Aehrenthal's several attempts to impress Grey with the possible dangers of a Balkan conflagration met with the same response. Britain would not and could not become more closely involved. Even when Grey and the Foreign Office came to hear about the secret alliance between Serbia and Bulgaria in March 1912 this attitude of reserve and circumspection did not change substantially. Russia's success in forging the alliance between the two Balkan rivals appears to have come as somewhat of a surprise to Grey and he took great care that Austria-Hungary should not hear about it.

Aehrenthal's successor at the Ballhausplatz was Count Berchtold, as previously mentioned. A great landed magnate,

Leopold Berchtold had been like Aehrenthal before him the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at St. Petersburg, possessing a similar wide knowledge of Russian affairs. As with his predecessor, Berchtold regarded it as axiomatic that the Monarchy could only be by its very nature a conservative power, primarily concerned with the maintenance of the status quo and traditional treaties- Bosnia and Herzegovina notwithstanding- and wary of anything that might disturb them. Although there were noticeable differences of emphasis in the approach of the two men their underlying principles- their Leitmotif, so to speak- remained the same. As a statesman Berchtold was far more flexible than Aehrenthal had ever been and this attitude stemmed from his many personal experiences as a career diplomat. While Aehrenthal had shown a curious dismissiveness vis-à-vis Britain and British influence, Berchtold, in contrast, showed both respect and consideration. This enabled him, accordingly, to be far more amenable to both a *modus operandi* and a *modus vivendi* with Grey. Berchtold was in fact more than willing to try and solve international problems via the medium of the Concert of Europe.

In July 1912 Grey sought through the agency of Mensdorff to assure the new Austrian Foreign Minister that Britain's support for the maintenance of the Balkan status quo should not be under-rated but unlike the Monarchy Britain did not believe that Russian intrigues were the greatest threat to it but the palpable inability of the Turks to put their own house in order. This might be considered as somewhat disingenuous on Grey's part since he knew full well by now that the status quo was being directly challenged by the alliance between Serbia and Bulgaria, concluded largely under Russian auspices. As the Russian Minister in Sofia, M. Nekludov, later candidly admitted:

"M. Hartwig (the Russian Minister in Belgrade) and I were the constant arbiters, constantly consulted and referred to in each difficulty, however small by the parties." (45)

Since these Ministers were in constant contact with either the Russian Foreign Minister, M. Sazonov, or his deputy, it could not be denied that the Serbo-Bulgarian alliance was a fundamental part of Russian policy and strategy in the Balkans. (46) One might even add that Grey's attempt to allay Berchtold's fears

by alluding to the failure of the so-called 'Charykov Kite'- the attempt by the Russian ambassador at Constantinople to forge an alliance between the Balkan States and the Ottoman Turks against Austria-Hungary- was a quasi feint or subterfuge to distract from the embarrassing fact that an alliance had been concluded between Serbia and Bulgaria, to which Greece and Montenegro were later to adhere.(47) Grey went on to say, in a further attempt at reassurance, that Charykov's lack of success seemed to deter Russia from any further attempt to raise the question of allowing Russian warships through the Straits- the price or quid pro quo that she had demanded from Turkey for persuading the Balkan States to adopt a conciliatory policy towards her. Neither Mensdorff nor Berchtold were either convinced or impressed. In fact in a letter to Mensdorff on July 20th Berchtold pointed out the dramatic change that had taken place in the last two years over the question of maintaining the status quo as far as the Great Powers were concerned. All three members of the Triple Alliance had originally been in favour of it but this was hardly the case now. Turkey was no longer Germany's protégé and Italy was actually at war with her. On the opposing side, Russia had recovered sufficiently from her traumatic defeat at the hands of the Japanese in 1904-5 to pursue a much more forward policy. In 1908 she had had little option but to adopt an accommodating position towards the Monarchy over the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina but now she felt strong enough to begin to strike back. Only Great Britain seemed willing to try and 'hold the dam back' and this, prima facie, somewhat surprisingly, given her much warmer relations with the Tsarist Empire. Almost certainly though this was due to the fact that through her possession of India, inter alia, Britain, too, had a large number of Moslem subjects and, therefore, could hardly be seen to be standing idly by while Turkey and the Caliphate associated with her either disintegrated or was attacked- or a combination of the two. Thus, in this respect, Berchtold believed both Great Britain and the Monarchy shared a marked community of interest. However, there was a codicil, so to speak, to this. However anxious the Austrian Foreign Minister was to secure Britain's

support, Berchtold stressed that this would not be at the expense of the Monarchy's alliance with Germany. The scenario which he had in mind was common action by Britain and Austria-Hungary but, in such a way, as to avoid each power compromising their previous treaty commitments. Much to Berchtold's comfort the British proved to be not unreceptive to this suggestion for in the middle of June 1912 Sir Edward Grey's personal Private Secretary informed him that the British government was quite prepared to listen favourably to any proposals the Monarchy might make regarding the maintenance of the status quo in the Balkans. (48)

Events were, in fact, moving rapidly for in addition to the conflict with Italy, the Ottoman Empire was further shaken by a series of revolts in Albania in August 1912. The Turks, nolens volens, were forced to concede to the Albanian tribes a large measure of administrative autonomy. To Berchtold this seemed an opportunity to persuade Grey and the Foreign Ministers of the other Great Powers to make a collective *démarche* to the Turks, asking for similar concessions for the Empire's Christian population. Grey gave Berchtold's idea a sympathetic reception, as he had promised, but thought it would be better if the Powers approached Turkey individually rather than collectively for fear of being seen to place unwelcomed pressure on her. (49) Since Berchtold was anxious for Grey not to think that the Monarchy was acting for purely selfish motives, he readily agreed. Berchtold's policy of '*fortiter in re, suaviter in modo*' thus seemed validated for Grey went on to commend him, saying: "Berchtold shows a very just appreciation of the situation." (50) Both the Foreign Minister and the Foreign Secretary agreed on several measures, particularly the reform of the Macedonian electoral system, one of the major areas of discontent. However, plans to resurrect the *conseils généraux* as the principal organs of administration in the individual vilayets, were, ultimately, to prove abortive. (51)

The following month Berchtold instructed Mensdorff to thank Grey for his appreciation of how important stability in the Balkans was for the Monarchy, although he understood that Britain preferred "to wait upon events" and "not to continue

discussions about purely hypothetical situations." (52)

Berchtold, however, believed that it was essential for Austria-Hungary to have some kind of plan of action in the event of a sudden, concerted attack by the Balkan States on Ottoman Turkey. Accordingly, he summoned a Council of Ministers to discuss this very issue on September 14th. While- incredible dictu- the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Sofia was still convinced as late as October that a Balkan alliance between Bulgaria and Serbia was a 'chimera', as Aehrenthal had always thought, Berchtold had known since May that it was a fait accompli. The Austrian Foreign Minister was also aware that Bulgaria and Greece had formed an alliance too, although the exact terms of which remained unknown. In spite of intense intelligence activity by the Monarchy's agents, they had not been able to discover the secret annexes in the treaties providing for the partition of Macedonia nor the secret defensive clauses in the treaty between Bulgaria and Serbia in March 1912 aimed specifically against the Monarchy. (53) The Council of Ministers were unable to come to any definitive plan of action, in spite of wide-ranging discussions in which Berchtold said that he feared the worst and that an attack on Turkey was definitely being mooted by the Balkan States. No consensus of opinion could be arrived at as far as unilateral action on the part of the Monarchy was concerned and the only real resolution, *faute de mieux*, was to continue to work jointly with the other Great Powers to preserve the status quo.

This indecision and procrastination (the traditional curse of the Habsburg dynasty in Grillparzer's words) brought forth bitter recriminations from the Chief of the General Staff, Blasius Schemua, who shared his predecessor Conrad von Hötzendorff's eagerness for prompt, military action. As a result he drew a personal Memorandum for the Emperor in which he bluntly declared that since Turkey was completely incapable of reforming herself and the maintenance of the status quo was no longer a valid option, the question of a definite plan of action was needed urgently, and the Monarchy could not conceivably "wait upon events", as the British advised. To do nothing and wait for events to unfold was to court disaster-

prophetic words, as it happened. If the Balkan States dared to attack Turkey then the Monarchy must immediately respond with force and there should be no equivocation on this point.

However, just as Franz Joseph had rejected Conrad von Hötzendorff's advice to attack Italy in 1911, so now the Emperor rejected Schemua's Memorandum. Berchtold's policy of co-operating with the Great Powers was still the order of the day, however problematic that seemed to becoming.

Berchtold's approach seemed, at least initially, to have the desired results since the Great Powers decided to present a Note to the Balkan States on October 8th. Drafted by the French Prime Minister, Raymond Poincaré and seconded by Grey, the Note declared that under the rights enshrined in Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin, the Great Powers themselves would take charge of all the fundamental reforms required of Ottoman Turkey. More significantly from the Monarchy's point of view, the Note further declared that any attack on Turkey would meet with universal condemnation and no change in the status quo would be tolerated.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Whether the British or Austrian governments fully believed that this declaration would seriously affect the plans of the Balkan States is a moot point, but, as it happened, it proved to be rather beside the point: on the day that it was delivered, little Montenegro declared war on Turkey, closely followed by Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece.

Once the war had begun the ostensible show of unity amongst the Powers soon disintegrated. While Austria-Hungary's prime concern was, naturally, for the integrity of Turkey, Russia's overriding preoccupation was for the interests of the Balkan States, particularly her protégé, Serbia. Almost certainly the Balkan States had counted upon this division amongst the Great Powers to inhibit any co-ordinated action against them. The Habsburg government proved to be particularly anxious about the strategically situated port of Salonica on the Aegean Sea and the principal maritime outlet for Macedonia, long suspected of being coveted by the Monarchy itself. Berchtold was concerned that not only should it not fall into the hands of Serbia but neither should it be occupied by Bulgaria, his comments to the contrary notwithstanding. Again he was anxious that Serbia should not seize the Sandjak of Novi Bazaar, so recently (Fig. 1)

evacuated by Austria-Hungary, which would give Serbia and Montenegro a common frontier for the first time. Grey's principal concern was of a different order: how to formulate a common policy which would defuse a potentially explosive situation leading to conflict between the Great Powers themselves.

How seriously the situation was seen can be gathered from an important Conference of Ministers that was held at the Ballhausplatz in Vienna during October. Discussion naturally centred on exactly what the Monarchy should do now that Turkey was under sustained and concerted attack. Berchtold said that it was clear from Serbia's line of assault that she proposed to seize as much ethnically Albanian territory as possible so as to fulfill her supreme ambition of gaining access to the Adriatic. This would explain why she had been willing to make important concessions to Bulgaria over Macedonia. In fact it seemed probable that Serbia would dearly like to partition the whole of Albania with Greece if she thought she could get away with it, allotting a small share to her fellow Slav ally, Montenegro. To forestall such a plan Berchtold even mooted the idea of the Monarchy itself partitioning Albania with Italy, but dropped the idea on the grounds of impracticability. It would also fly counter to the Monarchy's policy of thwarting any attempt by her Triple Alliance ally to establish herself on the other side of the Adriatic, which might very well present a future danger for Austria-Hungary in the event that Italy later became an enemy. A likelihood that Conrad von Hötzendorff had often stressed and Franz Joseph himself had openly acknowledged. Hence the warnings that the Ballhausplatz had made to Rome during Italy's attack on Turkey. The result of the discussions was that if Ottoman sovereignty could no longer be maintained then the best solution would be the creation of an independent Albanian state in this part of the Balkans.

Even while the Conference was still in session the Balkan States were carrying all before them and once again Conrad von Hötzendorff urged the need for immediate military intervention

before it were too late. The Chief of the Austrian General Staff's memoirs in fact read like the Sibylline Books: if action were not taken today then the price for doing it tomorrow would be catastrophic. As far as Conrad von Hötzendorff was concerned, of course, the ideal time to have struck at Serbia had been in 1908-9 at the time of the crisis over Bosnia-Herzegovina, but the moment had been allowed to slip. Now was perhaps the last chance the Monarchy would ever have of successfully crushing Serbia even if this ran the risk of war with Russia. While Berchtold often hesitated over the best course of action to follow unlike the Chief of the General Staff who consistently urged the cutting of the Gordian Knot by force, the Austrian Foreign Minister desperately sought any means short of war. In this he was once again to be upheld by the Emperor. Interestingly when the German government complained of Berchtold's seemingly perpetual vacillation he robustly defended himself, saying:

"The conduct of the Austrian policy had been made very difficult for him for the reason that, at the beginning of the Balkan conflict, his hands had been tied by his instructions, received from the highest authority, to the effect that he might conduct matters as he pleased, save that under no circumstances was he to permit it to come to a conflict with Russia." (55)

If this apologia pro vita sua were true (and there is no reason to believe otherwise) then Berchtold's options were indeed limited. The Emperor had in fact made it abundantly clear on other occasions, notably in 1908 and 1911, that "his policy was one of peace" and thus the strictures to which Berchtold was subjected by critics, both domestic and foreign, were both ill-conceived and largely unfair. Realistically, the Austrian Foreign Minister had no choice but to seek to act in tandem with the other Great Powers. One can imagine, therefore, Berchtold's acute discomfiture when Mensdorff reported to him that Grey and the British government now considered the restoration of the status quo impossible and that "the victor could not be deprived diplomatically of what he had won by the sword." (56). An evident far cry, one might add, from 1878 when Russia had been so deprived of her gains over Turkey at the Congress of Berlin.

Berchtold had further cause for concern when Mensdorff went on to say that the British government did not particularly care how the spoils of victory were carved up as long as it did not lead to conflict among the Great Powers themselves.(57) Rather ominously, Grey had also told Mensdorff that Britain hoped she would not be forced to choose between the two alliance systems. This, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador construed, was nothing less than a thinly veiled warning or even, some would say, threat against the Monarchy.(58) Berchtold's sole consolation came from the British press (unlike 1908) with The Times and the Westminster Gazette roundly declaring that Austria-Hungary had every reason to worry about any important territorial changes "in its own back-yard." (59)

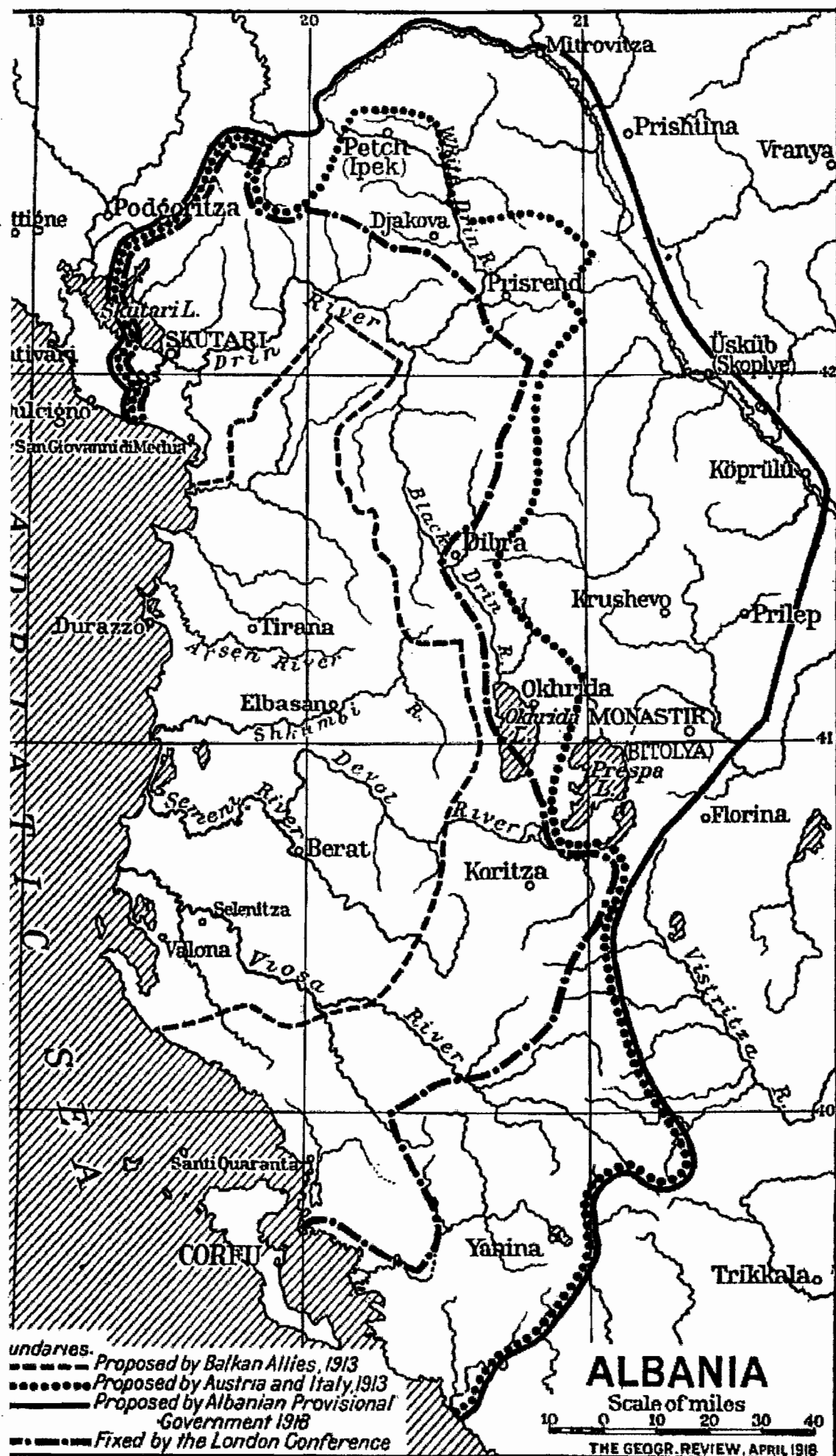
Initially, it would appear, Grey had hoped that the Monarchy and Russia would come to some agreement over what changes would be mutually acceptable to them but this optimism was to prove short-lived. The Monarchy's suspicions of the ultimate aims of the Tsarist Empire were soon aroused when the French Premier, Poincaré, declared that it would be exceedingly helpful if Austria-Hungary were to publicly state her complete 'désintéressement' in Balkan affairs. It did not require, in Berchtold's view, too much stretch of the imagination to fathom the origin of this suggestion and indeed, he was right-Russia. Berchtold quickly poured scorn on this idea, telling Cartwright that "the Monarchy considered itself a Balkan power (by virtue of geography, if nothing else) and would always do so." To make such a statement would, therefore, be, ipso facto, patently absurd and no bona fide Austrian statesman could possibly make it.

Mensdorff returned to this theme in a long discussion with Grey on November 4th. The ambassador stressed that Austria-Hungary would not stand passively by if any Balkan state were to increase its territory to the detriment of the Monarchy's vital strategic interests. Grey had no illusions as to what this meant: the innuendo was quite clearly that the Monarchy reserved the right to attack a particular Balkan state- Serbia- in extremis. Mensdorff also went on to say

that the sine qua non for Austria-Hungary's acceptance of any territorial gains by any Balkan state would be concrete guarantees of a 'good-neighbour' policy. Although Mensdorff tried to assure Grey that the Monarchy had no actual plans to attack Serbia, the British Foreign Secretary could find little comfort in that when Mensdorff added that any Serbian attempt to gain a foothold on the Adriatic would be resisted 'a limine.' If that did not imply war, then Grey wondered what did. More was to come. Austria-Hungary would also take a keen interest in any territorial changes which might imperil her economic and commercial relations, particularly regarding the fate of Salonica, which should be designated a free port.(61) In an attempt to lighten the atmosphere somewhat Grey told Mensdorff that the British government fully appreciated the Monarchy's legitimate concerns but Serbia's position had to be understood too: her desire for an outlet to the sea was a perfectly natural aspiration. At the risk of a double entendre, so to speak, Grey 'tested the water' by referring to the port of San Giovanni di Medua (Fig.2) but was alarmed by the ambassador's immediate and negative reaction. Serbia could have no possible claim on this port since it lay within indisputably ethnic Albanian territory and the Monarchy would quite simply not allow it. (62)

Two days later, on November 6th, Mensdorff was to have an interview with the new British monarch, George V who repeated what Grey had to say. The King further added that since the British public was totally on the side of the Balkan States any attempt to deprive them of their well-earned gains simply would not be tolerated. Like Grey he appreciated the Monarchy's anxieties but, similarly, Serbia's aims had to be considered, particularly as they had the support of Russia. As if 'to rub salt into the wound', as far as Mensdorff was concerned, George then added that he personally thought that if Serbia's small mountain ally, Montenegro, should succeed in capturing Scutari, then she should be allowed to keep it.(63)

Over the next few days Mensdorff was to be in constant contact with Berchtold, telling him of the general feeling in Britain amongst government and public alike: that notwithstanding



the Monarchy's legitimate worries Serbia should have a commercial access to the Adriatic. However, the picture was not quite so gloomy as it might, *prima facie*, appear. The British government did recognize the importance that Austria-Hungary attached to an autonomous, if not independent, Albanian state, and that, significantly, Serbian access to the sea need not be territorial.(64) Berchtold quickly fastened on this concession and instructed Mensdorff to make it abundantly clear that Austria-Hungary would never accept any territorial access to the Adriatic for Serbia. In an attempt at reinforcing an altruistic stance, Berchtold declared that Austria-Hungary was not only thinking of her own strategic interests but the rights of the indigenous Albanian population as well, who largely Moslem, would never accept the rule of the Orthodox Slav Serbs.(65) Mensdorff was also instructed to tell Grey that the Monarchy rejected the idea that any matters affecting Austria-Hungary's vital interests could safely be left to the post bellum situation as that was rather like 'shutting the stable-door after the horse had bolted' and running the risk of both Serbia and Montenegro presenting the Powers with a series of *faits accomplis*. Once entrenched in Albanian territory it would be doubly difficult to dislodge them.(66) Grey replied by restating Britain's support for either an autonomous or an independent Albanian state but pointed out that it was scarcely a practical proposition to try and delineate its frontiers at this time. The question of Serbia's economic and commercial access- if not territorial- to the Adriatic could indeed be safely left to a conference at a later date. On November 13th,(67) Grey said to Mensdorff that the British ambassador in Belgrade would be instructed to tell the Serbian government that Serbia could continue to count upon British support for access to the sea but this by no means implied territorial access. Economic and commercial egress could be arranged by other means. Moreover, it would be impressed on the Serbs that unless they proved flexible on this issue they risked losing the support and goodwill of the British government and public alike.(68) At the same time Cartwright reported from Vienna that a warning to the Serbs to this effect should be given as soon as

possible since the stunning defeats that the Balkan allies were inflicting on the Ottomans were whetting the Serbs' appetite for even more Turkish territory. Not only were they now demanding the vilayet of Kosovo, the heart of the old medieval Serbian state, but also the districts of Monastir (Fig. 3) and Skopje (Üskübb) as well as planning to partition all Albania with Greece- a small share to be allotted to Montenegro. Unless the Serbs were told, unequivocally, in Cartwright's view: 'usque adeo- ne plus ultra', then they might very well start demanding the cession of Bosnia-Herzegovina from Austria-Hungary with all the dangers that might entail. It was common knowledge that the Serbs had never reconciled themselves to the loss of these provinces and had only grudgingly accepted their annexation through force majeure. Given that the Monarchy was strongly backed by Germany and the Russians and French were supporting the Serbs the prospect of a wider conflict involving the Great Powers themselves was obvious. (69)

As the Serbian army continued its seemingly unstoppable advance on the sea through Albanian territory, Conrad von Aehrenthal once again urged immediate intervention but Berchtold like Cartwright still clung to the hope that a diplomatic solution might still be possible. (70)

While Berchtold struggled to ward off the constant attacks of the war-party in Vienna, once again with the Emperor's support, Sir George Buchanan, the British ambassador in St. Petersburg was desperately trying to convince the Serbian ambassador that Austria-Hungary's opposition to a Serbian port on the Adriatic was implacable. If war were to break out, Buchanan stressed the Serbs could not count on British support and just to reinforce the point further, Grey sent a telegram to that effect on November 13th. (71)

At this critical juncture, just like the proverbial Greek chorus, the Albanians themselves entered the scene, immensely strengthening Berchtold's hand. Suspecting, and rightly so, that Serbia's victories could very well betoken the not too distant partitioning of their country, the chiefs of the most important Albanian tribes met at Valona on November 28th and unilaterally proclaimed Albanian independence. Albanian resistance was now galvanized on a larger scale and the Serbs now had to deal with increasing attacks on their lines of communications.

FIGURE 3



Simultaneously, tension increased even further between Serbia and Austria-Hungary with the news that the Monarchy's consul in Skopje (Üsküb) had been assaulted and then kidnapped. Once again the Austrian General Staff, chaffing at the bit, so to speak, argued that force and only force could put a stop to Serbia's aggression but Berchtold in response pointed to the fact of the Albanians' own resistance which could not fail to impress the Great Powers and which, additionally, made military action by the Monarchy unnecessary. Grey was, however, fully aware of the tremendous domestic pressure to which Berchtold was daily subjected and wrote to Cartwright on November 22nd:

"It is fortunate that in Berchtold Austria-Hungary possesses a Foreign Minister with so much cleverness, discretion and patience, for otherwise the peace of Europe would be so seriously threatened." (72)

This judgement was, of course, the polar opposite of Winston Churchill- one might add. Nevertheless, that being said, Grey could not afford to offend Serbia's ally, Russia and so he now suggested that Serbia be given a strip of territory adjacent to the Montenegrin frontier running down to the sea. To defuse any possible objections on Austria-Hungary's part, Grey said that the Great Powers would give a concrete guarantee that Serbia would never be allowed to build a naval base on it- always the Monarchy's great fear. (73) Such a strip would not have to pass through any Albanian populated districts, and although the port at the end of it was not specifically mentioned, this could only be San Giovanni di Medua, which Mensdorff was quick to point out, the Austrian Foreign Minister had already categorically rejected. As far as the Monarchy was concerned any port on the Adriatic for Serbia was unacceptable per se and Mensdorff had hoped that Grey had by now appreciated this fact. Berchtold's obduracy on this point reminded Grey somewhat of Aehrenthal (but, naturally, to a much lesser degree) and gave him reason to despair. However, it appeared to pay dividends since Austria-Hungary's ambassador in St. Petersburg reported that, while Russia still supported Serbia's claims, she would not, nevertheless, view the Monarchy's refusal to countenance them as a *casus belli*. (73a)

A ray of light indeed but the atmosphere was still a heavy

one. Throughout November the Monarchy continued to reinforce the garrisons on the Galician frontier with Russia and, ominously, on December 12th, Berchtold's arch-critic, Conrad von Hötzendorff, was reappointed Chief of the Austrian General Staff. These military measures were accompanied by intense diplomatic activity, notably a renewal of the treaty of the Triple alliance on December 5th. A month previously Franz Ferdinand and Blasius Schemua, Conrad von Hötzendorff's predecessor, had been reassured of German support on their visit to Berlin. In opposition to Serbia, therefore, Austria-Hungary could count on the backing of both Germany and Italy.

Bethmann Hollweg, the German Chancellor had in fact made it abundantly clear in a speech to the Reichstag on December 2nd that the Monarchy would receive Germany's unequivocal support in any conflict with a third power while defending her vital interests in the Balkans. By the euphemism 'third power' everyone knew that Russia was meant. But this was not all. Early in January 1913, Conrad von Hötzendorff returned from Bucharest with the announcement that an alliance had been concluded with Roumania, thus protecting the Monarchy's flank in any possible conflict with Russia. Not only Russia but Grey too was, ipso facto, suitably impressed. However, Russia had already retreated from her former position of total support for Serbia, as previously mentioned, and this diplomatic coup merely reinforced her modified stance. To engage in war with the Central Powers was problematic enough without the additional worry of wondering how Roumania might now react. With Russia drawing back from the brink, Grey saw a further ray of hope in Serbia's declaration that she unreservedly apologized for the behaviour of her troops towards the Empire's consular officials in Macedonia during the recent campaign against the Turks. The crucial defusing of the international tension, however, came when both Austria-Hungary and Russia agreed in early December that they would accept Grey's proposal for an informal conference to discuss- and hopefully resolve- the most contentious issues that had arisen in the Balkans as the result of Turkey's defeat, if only in broad outlines.(74)

This conference in fact marked a real milestone in the history of diplomatic relations since its *raison d'être* was to determine an agreed course of action rather than arranging a post bellum peace as in the past. In complete contrast to the former *modus operandi*, that is of despatches and telegrams, a series of personal and informal discussions took place round a table- a quasi embryonic forerunner of the later League of Nations in 1919. In spite of the serious divisions among the Great Powers the conference was to prove largely successful, thanks to the diplomatic prowess and tact of the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey. This was readily attested to by the German ambassador, Prince Lichnowsky, who commented:

"Sir Edward Grey conducted the negotiations with prudence, calmness and tact. As often as a question threatened to become complicated he suggested a form of agreement that met the case and was invariably accepted. His personality won him equal confidence among all who took part in the Conference." (75)

However, Berchtold did lay down one stringent condition for agreeing to take part and that was that the conference be held in London rather than Paris, as Poincaré had originally suggested. The reason for this was quite simply because Russia's former Foreign Minister was now the ambassador there and after Izvolsky's severe *contretemps* with Aehrenthal in 1908-9 the Russian statesman was still very much *persona non grata* as far as the Monarchy was concerned. True to form Conrad von Hötzendorff continued to press for a military solution but Berchtold had the Emperor's support and he was over-ruled. The Chief of the Austrian General Staff was rather like the needle of an old record-player, stuck in the same groove and continually playing the same old tune.

The conference began on December 7th and the results seemed to substantiate and vindicate Berchtold's policy of Great Power co-operation rather than unilateral military action as Conrad von Hötzendorff advocated. First of all a consensus was reached that the projected Albanian state should extend from Montenegro in the north to Greece in the south, thereby excluding Serbia from any access to the Adriatic. (Fig,3) Moreover, Berchtold also gained the right for Austria-Hungary and Italy to jointly draw up a plan for the autonomous government of the new entity. The

Austrian Minister's determination on these issues was intimately related to his need 'to spike the guns'- both literally and metaphorically- of the war-party in Vienna. Conrad von Hötzendorff was clamouring for the re-occupation of the Sandjak of Novi Bazaar at the very least in order to preclude the formation of a common frontier between Serbia and Montenegro.(76) (vide maps at end)

Ever mindful of the need to conciliate Russia, however, Grey managed to persuade Berchtold to accept that Serbia should be given the free use of an Albanian port for her trade. Although this was far from meeting Serbian ambitions, this did have the advantage of freeing the kingdom from dependency on the Austro-Hungarian commercial system through Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, this concession had greater political importance than might *prima facie* appear for it meant that Austria-Hungary would have to renounce any plans it might have to keep Serbia in a position of economic and commercial vassalage.(77) That the Serbs for their part saw this concession as merely 'a payment on account' is evident from a letter from the Serbian Minister in Bucharest to his Foreign Secretary in Belgrade on November 13th 1912.

"The Ministers of Russia and France advise as friends of Serbia, that we should declare ourselves satisfied with a guarantee of an unconditional free use of an Adriatic port; and the time will come when we shall be able to retain some such port as our own."(78)

Although it is uncertain if *au fond* this was Grey's *arrière pensée*, clearly it was that of Russia and France, as the Minister indicated. Indeed he was remarkably candid for he went on to say:

"It would be better that Serbia, which would be at least twice as large as formerly, should strengthen herself and gather herself together, in order to await with as great a degree of preparedness as possible important events, which must make their appearance among the Great Powers. Otherwise if a European war started, Europe will make Serbia responsible for the catastrophe."(79)

Clearly the coming of a general European war was seen as inevitable and the prime consideration seems to have been to ensure that the blame for it fell on somebody else. That this sentiment was widespread- particularly in Russia- can be

seen from a letter of the Russian ambassador in London at this time, Count Benckendorff, regarding the possession of Scutari- Montenegrin or Albanian? (Fig.3)

"It is extremely important that the blame for the obduracy in the most difficult question (of Scutari) at the Conference should fall upon Austria alone. It will not be easy to achieve this, and yet everything may depend upon it. At the critical moment Grey will only have public opinion on his side if Russia has done all within her power to maintain peace, in so far as our position permits." (80)

Although Berchtold was pleased and relieved that the principle of an autonomous/ independent Albanian state had been conceded by all the Great Powers, it soon became clear that the new state was not to be as large as the Austrian Minister ideally wanted. Not only were Russia and France, supported by Great Britain, adamant that cognizance had to be taken of Serbia and Montenegro's military victories but this was position of Austria-Hungary's Triple Alliance allies too.

The crucial bone of contention was the possession of the important mountain city and fortress of Scutari, mentioned above. Strongly defended by the Ottoman general, Esad Pasha, this city was regarded as the natural capital of the Northern Albanian tribes and, as a consequence, Berchtold was resolved that it should not fall into the hands of Montenegro and least of all Serbia, whose armies were closely besieging it. Long coveted by the Montenegrins on account of its great economic and strategic significance on the shores of a large lake of the same name, its loss would, in Berchtold's view, probably make any Albanian state unviable, which, of course, is exactly what the Montenegrins and Serbs wanted. Berchtold's obstinacy on this issue scarcely surprised Grey but it caused him a great deal of anxiety since he knew full well that Montenegro had the strong support of Russia. (Historically relations between the two countries had been so strong since Peter the Great's day that the Montenegrins had a saying: 'We may be small but we and the Russians are 150 million!') (81) With considerable apprehension Grey set out to play the role of 'honest broker', pointing out that since Russia had given way to Austria-Hungary over the question of territorial access to the Adriatic for Serbia the quid pro quo on the Monarchy's part was to defer to

Russia on the question of Scutari. Berchtold was naturally disappointed at Grey's stance but he appreciated the delicacy of his position: the need to accommodate Russia. However, it was the attitude of Prince Lichnowsky and the German government that caused him the most discomfort when they announced that they agreed with Grey. (82)

Throughout December tension between Austria-Hungary and Russia grew over the Scutari issue, and although Grey knew that war was the last thing that Berchtold wanted, the placing of the Monarchy's forces in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Dalmatia on a war-footing could be considered as unnecessarily provocative to Russia. Within the Monarchy there was severe criticism of this move too- not from the war-party naturally, but from a wholly different quarter- that of the Common Finance Minister. On January 4th 1913, Berchtold was bluntly told that the Empire's financial situation could not sustain such a policy of 'brinkmanship'- if indeed that were what it was. However, once again it was Germany's attitude that Berchtold found the most reprehensible when the Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg declared that Germany's support for her ally was by no means unconditional. In fact, he continued, in the interests of peace and indeed of better relations between Germany and Britain- something which Berchtold claimed he earnestly wanted to see- it would be better for the Monarchy to give way. Berchtold was furious and exclaimed that this amounted to nothing less than "an impertinent disregard for the Monarchy's vital interests" (83) and represented an incredible back-sliding on Germany's part.

While the question of Scutari's possession was a purely peripheral one as far as Britain was concerned- just like that of Albania's frontiers in general- Grey had no option but to recognize their importance because of the very real possibility of conflict between Austria-Hungary and Russia over the issue. Pan-Slav agitation was at a fever-pitch in St. Petersburg, according to the British ambassador, Nicolson, and the overthrow of the Tsarist government was not inconceivable if Russia were seen to give way as she had in 1908-9. Similarly, in Vienna, the government was experiencing tremendous domestic pressure, not only from 'the usual suspects'- Conrad von Hötzendorff and company- but from wide sections of the public.

That there was the real danger of a general conflagration was by no means underestimated by either government or public. Most people were aware that Russia was not in the debilitated state that she was five years before and this fact weighed heavily with Berchtold as it did with Grey. Both statesmen were conscious that Russia might very well feel she had no option but to cry 'see you'- to borrow a phrase from poker- unless she wanted to lose all prestige with the Balkan States. George V too tried hard to impress on Mensdorff the potentially catastrophic consequences for the Tsarist government if Russia were forced into a humiliating withdrawal over Scutari.(84) The Austro-Hungarian ambassador said the point was well taken but, *mutatis mutandis*, the same could be said of Austria-Hungary. Both the Vienna and the Budapest governments had to take note of their respective publics and could not lightly afford to ignore the perceived common interests of the Monarchy as a whole. While the people did not determine policy which was still the prerogative of the Emperor, neither could the Habsburg government ignore them completely. The days of purely dynastic considerations, whatever Steed may have thought, had really gone, even in conservative, monarchical Austria.(85)

This seeming impasse was fortunately resolved by the Emperor himself. Seriously concerned at the prospect of war with Russia, Franz Joseph agreed to make sweeping concessions to both Serbia and Montenegro on Albania's north-eastern frontier in return for securing Scutari for the new state. Thus, Austria-Hungary agreed not only to the surrender of Ipek and Prizren but also the purely ethnic Albanian towns of Dibra and Djakova.(Fig.3) Once again both Mensdorff and Berchtold appreciated the fact that Britain had to pay heed to Russia's wishes but Germany's attitude continued to disappoint them. The Kaiser's declaration that he would have great difficulty in persuading his people of the necessity of a war over a town like Scutari which most Germans had never heard of, gave particular offence in Vienna to government and public alike.(86)

Russia's reluctant acquiescence of Scutari's incorporation into Albania helped defuse a potentially explosive situation but by no means resolved the problem since the Montenegrins

were still determined to seize the city. The problem was further compounded by the fact that inspite of Berchtold's urgings over the next weeks the Great Powers seemed reluctant to take any concrete action against the Montenegrins and he was met only with evasion and circumlocution. Only when the Austrian Foreign Minister declared that, *faute de mieux*, Austria-Hungary would, in extremis, take unilateral action did the Powers agree to a naval demonstration off the Montenegrin coast. Even then the French were markedly reluctant and the Russians would have nothing to do with it at all. Emboldened by Russia's attitude in particular- which amounted in Montenegro's eyes to 'qui tacet, consentire' (he who is silent gives consent)- the Montenegrins continued to press the siege of the city with their Serbian allies, finally forcing Essad Pasha to capitulate on April 22nd.

Berchtold was determined that the Montenegrins should be compelled to relinquish control of the city for else the Concert of Europe would be reduced to a laughing-stock. At the very least, he demanded, Montenegro's ports should be bombarded- if not physically occupied.(87) This reluctance on the part of the Powers to act once more led to fierce attacks on Berchtold's policy by members of the Austrian General Staff.

On April 28th the Conference met and in an attempt to conciliate Berchtold, Grey said he would be personally willing to recommend military action against the Montenegrins to the other members of the Cabinet but he seriously doubted that they would agree. Then again, he too would much prefer a peaceful solution to the problem. Some form of economic or financial compensation should be offered to Montenegro in return for their yielding of the city.(88) After all, Grey told Mensdorff, he wondered if British public opinion "would admit that the lives of British bluejackets should be endangered for the purpose of bringing Montenegro to reason." (89) Berchtold in reply told Mensdorff to inform Grey that, naturally, Austria-Hungary would prefer a peaceful solution too, in spite of some elements on the General Staff, but if all else failed and the other Powers refused to act, then the Monarchy would take action on its own. When Grey answered that it was essential that the Great Powers be seen to act in concert, Berchtold said that he could not agree more but the

point was rather that France was half-hearted and Russia completely unwilling. The following day, on April 29th (90) Berchtold summoned a Council of Ministers to discuss the possibility of some form of joint action with her Triple Alliance ally, Italy, or, in extremis, to go it alone. Berchtold, whose proverbial patience was fast coming to an end, was remarkably sanguine, saying that any move against Montenegro would almost certainly involve conflict with Serbia, and any clash with Serbia, war with Russia. Although the Monarchy was not at fault, Austria-Hungary would also run the risk of alienating Great Britain for Britain would find it politically impossible to remain 'au-dessous de la mêlée' for fear of losing Russia's friendship. However reluctantly, she would ultimately side with the Tsar. Although fully aware of the dangers the Council, nevertheless, gave Berchtold their support and the Monarchy's forces in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Dalmatia were put on an immediate war-footing. Fortunately, this quasi 'va banque' strategy had the desired effect for the Montenegrins realized that this was no bluff and hastened to assure both Austria-Hungary and Britain that they would evacuate Scutari by May 5th. While Berchtold breathed a sigh of relief, the Austrian General Staff once again exhibited their frustration that "another opportunity to put these arrogant young Slav states in their place" had been thrown away. (91)

While the main crisis had been resolved to the Monarchy's satisfaction, there still remained the contentious questions of the new Albanian state's frontiers and its internal organisation. Grey saw his role as continuing to play the part of mediator between the conflicting claims of the Dual Alliance on the one hand and Austria-Hungary and Italy on the other. At this juncture there was a ray of light in the signing of the Treaty of London on May 29th which finally put an end to the war between Turkey and the Balkan States. By this treaty Turkey ceded the bulk of her remaining European (Figure 6.) possessions to the victorious allies, retaining a small portion of eastern Thrace- the so-called 'Enos-Midia line.' Both sides also agreed to leave the fate of Albania and the Aegean Islands

FIGURE 6.



to the collective decision of the Great Powers. The majority of the islands had been seized by the Greeks but one archipelago—that of the Dodecanese, still remained in Italian hands as a result of the war of 1911-12. (Fig. 4)

The next serious bone of contention between the Great Powers arose around whether Albania should have either a provisional government or a permanent one. Grey himself was inclined to support the idea of a purely provisional administration which was what Russia and France wanted but Berchtold insisted that it be a permanent one. Although Grey had anticipated objections on Austria-Hungary's part he was to be surprised at the vehemence of Berchtold's refusal to entertain anything less than a permanent administration. The British Foreign Secretary became seriously alarmed when once more Berchtold reserved the right to act unilaterally if no agreement were reached. (92) Such an act, Grey warned, could have "incalculable consequences" since it would fuel both Russian and French suspicions that "Austria-Hungary and Italy were scheming to divide Albania between them" (93)—which, indeed, had, it will be remembered, been discussed.

Negotiations between the two sides were to continue, fruitlessly, throughout July with Grey finally threatening to bring the Conference to an end unless agreement were reached. Berchtold's determination was to pay dividends, however, in which the Monarchy secured its principal aim. In return for Austria-Hungary's agreement to extend the life of the Central Commission supervising Albanian affairs from five to ten years, Russia and France accepted the creation of a hereditary principedom ruled by the Prince of Wied. Berchtold could be additionally pleased because this minor German prince was the nephew of the Queen of Roumania and well-known for his pro-Austrian sympathies. All things considered, in spite of the concessions made to Russia and France, Austria-Hungary had gained the most. The creation of an independent Albanian state ensured that the Monarchy's exit from the Adriatic to the Mediterranean would not be endangered by any potentially hostile power at a point where the Italian and Balkan peninsulas came closest. (94)

FIGURE 4



In spite of his success, Berchtold's faith in Concert diplomacy had been sorely shaken. It had taken the threat of unilateral action by Austria-Hungary to galvanize the other Great Powers and even then, Russia had remained demonstrably aloof. Malgré lui, Berchtold had to admit that something could be said for the arguments of Conrad von Hötendorff and the Austrian General Staff. Berchtold's disillusionment with the Great Powers is graphically revealed in a letter to Mensdorff on June 18th. Commending his ambassador for achieving so much "between hostile Triple Entente colleagues on the one hand and feeble Triple Alliance colleagues on the other" (95) he could scarcely conceal his anger at Germany's attitude, in particular. A point which was taken up by the Russian ambassador in Berlin in a report of January 30th 1913:

"The more I look about me, the more I listen, the more I come to the conclusion that in Berlin they wish to avoid war at all costs, and that they have in all probability made this clear in Vienna. Indeed, it is in Vienna, ascribed to Germany's restraining influence that Austria gave up her demands to have the towns of Djakowa and Dibra placed under Albanian sovereignty." (96)

While the question of Albania's northern frontier had been determined by the exclusion of Serbia from the Adriatic and Montenegro from Scutari (Djakowa and Dibra being the price), the state's southern frontier had still to be settled. Here, Austria-Hungary met not only the expected opposition of Russia and France but also the luke-warm attitude of Germany-again. In her claims to Epirus Greece was warmly supported by the Dual Alliance but even Germany sympathized with her through the fact that the Kaiser was the brother-in-law of the Greek king, Constantine. In fact Germany's evident reluctance to support the Monarchy on this issue threatened once again, in Berchtold's view, the very foundations of the Albanian state, just as the loss of Scutari would have done. Berchtold's obvious anger was shown in the "peremptory tone of the instructions emanating from Vienna" which alarmed both Mensdorff and Grey alike. (97)

Grey took the view that the question of Albania's southern frontier ought to be resolved *pari passu* with the

fate of the Aegean Islands, whether occupied by the Greeks or the Italians. If Greece concurred with Austria-Hungary's proposals for Albania's southern frontier then it would be only reasonable for the Monarchy to accept as the necessary *quid pro quo* Greece's retention of the Aegean Islands occupied by her, on grounds of nationality, if nothing else. Since Berchtold had made ethnicity a cardinal factor in the creation of the new Albanian state then, *mutatis mutandis*, Austria-Hungary could only, logically, admit the validity of Greek claims. Thus, all those islands with a Greek-speaking majority, except Imbros and Tenedos, which commanded the entrance to the Dardanelles and therefore, for strategic reasons should (Fig.4) be left to Turkey, should be ceded to Greece. This criterion should also apply, in Grey's view, to the Italian occupied Dodecanese. While this might seem eminently reasonable to an impartial observer, neither Austria-Hungary nor Italy, accepted that the two questions should be linked in this way. The Italian ambassador declared that no Italian government would remain in office for more than five minutes were it to agree to such a proposal, and in any case, Italy was duty bound by the Treaty of Lausanne to return the islands to Turkey once the Turks had finally evacuated Tripoli.(98)

To resolve this impasse Grey now suggested that an international commission be appointed to delineate Albania's southern frontier and while Berchtold did not reject the idea *per se*, he laid down a series of preconditions in a Memorandum which Mensdorff transmitted to the British Foreign Secretary on July 1st. The most important of these was that the entire coast opposite Corfu should be ceded to Albania, (Fig.2) as far as Cape Kafalu. This strategic section of coast could, in the hands of Greece, be used to build a naval base, threatening Austria-Hungary's communications with the Mediterranean and Near East. Grey was disappointed at Berchtold's stance, but, somewhat strangely, the outbreak of the Second Balkan War, came to Grey's aid.(an unusual illustration, perhaps of the old adage that 'it's an ill-wind that doesn't blow somebody some good.') Angered at Serbia's seizure of more

territory in Macedonia than the alliance between Bulgaria and Serbia had contemplated, the former made a sudden attack on her erstwhile ally. The attack, although sudden, was scarcely unexpected by the Serbs, and in conjunction with the Greeks, Roumanians and, even the resurgent Turks, they quickly overwhelmed the Bulgarians. (July 1913) The result was that Bulgaria lost even more territory in Macedonia, enabling the Serbs and the Greeks to form a common frontier for the first time. Indeed, it had been the absence of such a frontier that had largely prompted Greece's demand for the coast opposite Corfu in the first place. (99) (Fig 5) Grey also managed to persuade the French to drop their demand for the immediate surrender of the Dodecanese Islands in return for Italy's promise to allow the Great Powers to determine their ultimate fate. (100) Berchtold also received an assurance that the International Commission entrusted with drawing up Albania's southern frontier would be instructed to take into account ethnic as well as geographical considerations. Under general pressure, Greece promised to withdraw all her troops from the disputed districts in southern Albania (northern Epirus) within a month of the Commission completing its work on November 10th.

The Conference's final meeting took place on August 11th. Grey had succeeded in reconciling the demands of the two opposing alliance systems, even though the division between them had seemed, initially, unbridgeable. More importantly, here, from the point of view of Anglo-Austrian relations, Grey succeeded in allaying Berchtold's original suspicion that Britain had been holding a secret brief for Russia and France, rather than trying to acknowledge the legitimate strategic concerns of the Habsburg Monarchy. (101)

For Berchtold, as has been seen, one of the most important demands of the Conference had been to insist on Serbia's evacuation of all the districts intended for the new Albanian state. However the passing of resolutions is, as is well-known, one thing, their implementation another. While the Serbian Premier, Pasić, answered the collective *démarche* of the Great Powers on August 17th with a promise to carry out the

withdrawal, the Serbian army continued in practice to remain in situ.(102) Berchtold made several attempts to negotiate directly with Pasić in Vienna but all to no avail. It seemed that the Serbs like the Montenegrins would only respond to the threat of force majeure.

The Serbs tried to justify their continuing non-compliance by pointing to the 'chaotic conditions' existing in Albania, which made the presence of their troops indispensable. An argument which, in Berchtold's view, was as disingenuous as it was fatuous- for as he told the British government these 'chaotic conditions' were the direct result of allowing Serbia to occupy purely Albanian towns like Prizren, Ipek, Djakowa (Fig.5) and Dibra. Clearly Berchtold deeply regretted the agreement whereby these towns were surrendered to Serbia in return for Russia and France's acceptance of the incorporation of Scutari into Albania.(103) In spite of the Albanians' stiff resistance the Serbs continued their advance and as a consequence, on October 3rd, Berchtold summoned a Council of Ministers in which not only Conrad von Hötzendorff (as usual) but also the normally pacific Hungarian Premier, Count Tisza, argued for war. The seriousness of the situation was stressed by the German ambassador, Prince Lichnowsky, who told Grey that in order to avoid a catastrophe the Serbs must be compelled to implement the Conference's decisions. Regrettably, the ambassador reported to Berchtold, the British government seemed more concerned about the Monarchy's threat to resort to force. Indeed, Sir Eyre Crowe articulated the general feeling of the British Foreign Office when he declared that Britain "would roundly condemn any unilateral action by the Monarchy that was tantamount to breaking up the Concert without warning." It is hardly any wonder that Berchtold (104) received this report with considerable indignation for in his view it seriously misrepresented the Monarchy's position in the face of outright provocation by Serbia. The Monarchy had shown a degree of restraint and forbearance that he doubted any other power would have displayed, including Great Britain. Berchtold was to be further incensed when Eyre Crowe reiterated Serbia's arguments about the need for her troops to remain in

in Albania because of the internal condition of the country.

Berchtold finally decided that enough was enough and declared that the Monarchy would not give way before what seemed like scarcely veiled attempts at intimidation. Thus, on October 17th a Note was despatched to Serbia demanding the immediate evacuation of all the districts ascribed to Albania, failing which military action would follow.(106) If the Serbs had any lingering doubts about Austria-Hungary's resolve this Note banished them. The Serbian government hastened to assure Berchtold that they would withdraw from all the disputed districts which they did 8 days later on October 25th. Although Grey was displeased at Austria-Hungary's action he could scarcely have been surprised since Berchtold had given him ample warning. Moreover, the fact that the British Foreign Secretary made no attempt to intervene on the Serbs behalf was a tacit admission that the Monarchy had right on her side- *qui tacet consentire*- again. Probably what weighed heavier with Grey was the fact that Berchtold had not chosen to inform him of what he (Berchtold) intended to do until a day after the Note had been sent.(107)

Bad feeling between the two governments at this time was further exacerbated by the Austrian Foreign Minister's sudden demand that the British ambassador, Sir Fairfax Cartwright, be recalled. Although a popular figure in Viennese society his outspoken criticism of Germany, Austria-Hungary's principal ally, had made him *persona non grata* and Aehrenthal had already taken exception to his provocative remarks. Shortly after taking office, Berchtold had requested that he be replaced but had not insisted upon it until now. Grey and the British Foreign Office had accepted the demand but had delayed taking any action. Berchtold's peremptory stance made his removal imperative and, accordingly, Cartwright was replaced by Sir Maurice de Bunsen de Bunsen on November 24th.

It was against this acrimonious background that the two Commissions entrusted with delineating Albania's northern and southern frontiers began their work. Although this was made easier by the final withdrawal of the Serbian army, the task was, nevertheless, bedevilled by conflict between the

two alliance groupings so that the northern Commission had scarcely finished its work when war broke out in July 1914.(108) Similar problems hampered the work of the southern Commission with the additional complication that the united front of the Triple Alliance was undermined by the Kaiser's concern for his Greek relation. Thus, in determining the frontier of the new state with Greece neither Austria-Hungary nor Italy could be sure of German support. In these difficult circumstances Grey tried to bring the two sides together but he could not help suspecting that the Monarchy was trying "to turn the international control of Albania into an Austrian control." (109) Grey voiced his suspicions to the French ambassador, Cambon, saying that "this policy might result in an absolute deadlock on the Commission delineating the southern frontier." (110) Nicolson was even more sanguine than the Foreign Secretary, declaring that such dissension was proof that an artificially created state like Albania was not long for this world. Moreover, it went without saying that there was little chance of the Greeks evacuating northern Epirus all the while the Italians maintained control of the Dodecanese Islands.(111)

Although the Greeks continually obstructed the southern Commission's work, Grey's proposals for the frontier were in fact accepted by all parties in December 1913, which came as a pleasant surprise. Once again it seemed that Berchtold's tenacity had paid off since the proposals largely met the wishes of Austria-Hungary rather than Russia and France. On December 19th, by the so-called Protocol of Florence (to which the Commission had moved from Monastir) the new state's southern frontier was set at a line drawn from Phtelia to Lake Prespa, giving Albania control of Koritsa and Argyrocastro. (112) (fig.2)

Although the fate of the Greek occupied Aegean Islands was not mentioned in the text, Grey was determined that Greece should keep them since:

"It was on the understanding that Greece would keep the islands in her occupation, except Tenedos and Imbros, that an agreement to assign Koritsa and Phtelia to Albania was reached." (113)

The representatives of the Triple Alliance were quick to

assure Grey that they had no intention of postponing a decision on the islands 'ad Graecas Kalendas'- a wry pun in the circumstances since the Greek calendar had no Kalends, unlike the Roman (end of the month) and therefore meant, proverbially, never; however, they were determined that the Greeks should evacuate all the disputed districts by January 1914. Somewhat grudgingly, as was usually the case with Eyre Crowe, when he believed that the Triple Alliance had got the better of the deal, he accepted Austria-Hungary and Italy's argument but emphasized, as did Grey, that the two issues had to be resolved, *pari passu*, and not separately. (114)

Another bone of contention between the Monarchy and Great Britain at this time centred on the financing of the new Albanian administration headed by the Prince of Wied. Crowe was extremely suspicious of Berchtold's offer to do so, since he believed that this was hardly an act of altruism on the Monarchy's part but a means to gain control of the new state on the basis of the old axiom: 'He who pays the piper, calls the tune.' In a Minute to a report from the new British ambassador in Vienna, de Bunsen to Grey, Crowe ventured that Britain should be very wary of "the selfish policy pursued by Austria-Hungary and Italy in Albania" since:

"The whole position of Great Britain in the world rests largely on the confidence she has earned that at least with questions not touching her own vital interests she deals strictly on their merits according to the generally accepted standards of right and wrong." (115)

(En passant, one might remark, that it would, presumably, be more meritorious if Britain acted "to the generally accepted standards of right and wrong" even when "her own vital interests" were involved. After all, all states can afford to be altruistic when their own interests are not in question.) Be that as it may, Grey echoed Crowe's sentiments in a conversation with the French ambassador, Paul Cambon. Grey had in fact seriously considered abandoning the Commission altogether until persuaded by Crowe that this would be a fatal mistake since it would leave the Monarchy in almost complete control of the situation. Britain, Crowe argued, should try and ensure that the Commission was able to create

a truly independent Albanian state and to prevent either the Monarchy or Italy from converting it "into a private preserve of their own." (116) After some hesitation Grey came round to Crowe's viewpoint and announced that Britain would "join in the loan and its guarantee" provided that "the other Great Powers agreed to play their part in financing the new state." (117) This proposal was put to the Cabinet and was duly accepted by them on January 6th 1914.

Although a peace treaty had been concluded between Greece and Turkey on November 13th the question of the Aegean Islands still remained unresolved. The day before Grey had sent a confidential Memorandum to the Powers, suggesting once again that Greece be allowed to keep all the islands she had occupied with the exception of Tenedos and Imbros, while the Dodecanese be returned to Turkey once she had completely evacuated Tripoli under the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne. As far as he was concerned this would be a reasonable solution to the problem which both Greece and Italy should be able to accept. (118)

Grey's 'confidential' Memorandum did not remain confidential for long. The Turks soon got to hear of it and were incensed that they were expected to surrender the vast bulk of the Aegean Islands to Greece while the Italians were indignant at what they perceived to be was a blatant attempt to pressurize them into surrendering the Dodecanese. The Monarchy's reaction, too, was highly unfavourable with Berchtold taking exception to Grey's suggestion that Austria-Hungary was scarcely helping the situation with her support for her Italian ally. In a letter to Grey he rejected completely the idea that the Monarchy's stance was preventing a resolution of the problem and went on to add that it was unreasonable of Britain to expect Austria-Hungary to put pressure on her Italian ally to do something which she had already promised to do in the Treaty of Lausanne. In spite of his obvious annoyance, Berchtold said he would accept the bulk of Grey's proposals vis-à-vis Greek sovereignty over the Aegean Islands, as long as Castellerizo, close to Turkey's south-western shore, remained Ottoman, as well as Tenedos and Imbros. However, the sine qua non for Austria-Hungary's agreement was the complete

withdrawal of all Greek forces from northern Epirus by January 31st. There was a further condition: Greece must also promise to stop obstructing the creation of the new Albanian state. As far as the Dodecanese was concerned, the Monarchy's position was as before: the matters should be resolved by the two parties directly involved, Turkey and Italy, without any outside interference and in accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne. Somewhat reluctantly, Grey said he would accept Berchtold's position but felt it necessary to offer the following caveat:

"I would, however, point out that as long as one of the Great Powers remains in occupation of the Aegean Islands the situation will remain abnormal, and that while it is primarily a matter for Italy and Turkey to arrange the return of the islands to the latter in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne, yet all the Powers with whom by the subsequent agreement of last August it rested to decide the ultimate destination of the Islands have an interest in their fate." (120)

With his customary adroitness, both Russia and France were persuaded to accept this arrangement.

When the Protocol of Florence was handed to the Greek and Turkish governments on February 13th and 14th, respectively, their reaction was scarcely surprising. The Turks had known what to expect since they had got wind of Grey's Memorandum but now it was given the official imprimatur of all the Great Powers. To sacrifice all the islands in the Aegean to Greece, however close they might be to the Turkish shore—even if Tenedos, Imbros and Castellerizo were excepted, betrayed essential Turkish interests and they objected vehemently. The Greeks on the other hand now demanded important frontier modifications around Koritsa and Agyrocastro that were to be incorporated in the new Albanian state. (Fig. 2) While Grey and Nicolson had anticipated these objections they had not reckoned upon the vitriolic reaction of Austria-Hungary to them. Without any prior consultation with either the Russian or French members of the Commission, the Austro-Hungarian delegate rejected the latest Greek demands out of hand and sans ceremonie. This included the presumptuous demand in the Monarchy's view that Greece be accorded the right of 'protector'

of all those Greeks who should find themselves within the borders of the new state. Both Austria-Hungary and Italy made a declaration on March 8th, saying the Greek proposals were totally unacceptable. Much to the Greeks' chagrin no mention was made of the Italian occupied Dodecanese either. For the second time Grey considered ending Britain's participation in the Commission since the Monarchy's behaviour was "reprehensible and quite at variance with diplomatic protocol." (121) Mensdorff was forced to concede that the British Foreign Secretary was right and that he was, personally, embarrassed by his government's action. Informed of the British government's irritation, Berchtold tried to assure Grey that Austria-Hungary did not mean to give offence to Britain or any of the Great Powers but 'Extremis malis, extremis remedis'- extreme evils required extreme remedies. (122)

In spite of his criticism Grey did- somewhat paradoxically- support a collective *démarche* of the Powers on April 24th to the government in Athens, basically echoing the stance of the Austro-Hungarian and Italian delegates. The only significant difference was the stress laid upon the need for the Turks to respect the rights of the Greek-speaking inhabitants of Tenedos, Imbros and Castellarizo. However, the accommodation between the two alliance systems that the *démarche* seemed to epitomize was a fragile one, and both sides continued to view one another with suspicion. The Greeks and the Turks continued at loggerheads with each inciting revolts against the other in both Central Albania and northern Epirus, effectively frustrating all attempts to delineate Albania's southern frontier. Greek troops were still in occupation of northern Epirus in July 1914, and the Aegean Islands were still in dispute between Greece and Turkey as well as Italy, when the fateful shot rang out in Sarajevo on June 28th.

There can be little doubt that Anglo-Austrian relations had become exceedingly strained over the last few months; while the British were increasingly suspicious of the ultimate aims of Austro-Hungarian policy, Vienna was equally wary of Britain's apparent willingness to accommodate the Monarchy's

great rival in the Balkans, Russia: an accomodation which threatened to imperil the Empire's vital interests. In spite of Grey's success in defusing a potentially explosive situation which could easily have led to war amongst the Great Powers themselves, the underlying tensions still remained.

Austria-Hungary had certainly been able to thwart Serbia's desire for direct territorial access to the Adriatic but on closer inspection this success was a qualified one. Serbia had emerged from the wars with Turkey and Bulgaria in 1912-13 with vastly increased territory which the Monarchy was powerless to reverse. Additionally Serbia had also emerged with vastly increased prestige amongst the South Slav population of the Monarchy itself, giving further credence to the belief that her destiny was indeed that of a 'Slav Piedmont', acting as a magnet for all the other South Slavs and ultimately bringing about their unification in one state. Thus aggrandized, both territorially and psychologically, Serbia represented a greater danger to the Monarchy than ever before. At the Bucharest Peace Conference on August 10th 1913, which ended the Bulgarian war, the Serbian Premier, Pasić, alluded obliquely to this sentiment when he said, knowingly, to the Greek Minister, M. Politis: "The first game is won; now we must prepare for the second against Austria." (123) Similarly, Hartwig, the Russian Minister in Belgrade is reported to have said: "Turkey's business is finished: now it is Austria's turn." (124)

Indeed the cool, if not frosty, atmosphere between the Monarchy and Great Britain at this time was largely due to Berchtold's belief that Britain had failed to appreciate how menacing Serbia had become. Just as Piedmont/ Sardinia had been the catalyst for the unravelling of Austria's entire position in Italy in the mid-19th century, so, *mutatis mutandis*, Serbia was threatening to do the same in the Balkans, and what was more, endangering the very territorial integrity of the Monarchy itself. Britain's seeming reluctance (out of regard for Russia?) to acknowledge that Serbia's attraction for the disaffected South Slav population of the Empire

was anything but a passing concern but rather a life or death question, was a continual source of annoyance to Vienna. As a result, Berchtold and the Ballhausplatz were increasingly led to the conclusion that Grey's concern to accomodate the wishes of the Dual Alliance- particularly Russia- in the wider interests of Britain's Weltpolitik, represented an indirect attack- thoughtless at the best, reprehensible at the worst- on the Monarchy's very existence as a Great Power in the only area of major significance to her- the Balkans.

CHAPTER VI
GREAT BRITAIN AND AUSTRIA-HUNGARY
THE JULY CRISIS AND ATTITUDES AT
THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

In spite of some misgivings at the evident growing power of Russia in the Foreign Office there was no question that by the Spring of 1914 Britain's underlying commitment was to the Franco-Russian Alliance in the so-called Triple Entente. As the previous chapter has indicated the chief conflict between the two continental blocs centred on the control of the Balkans and, ultimately, by extension the Near and Middle East. Hinging on Russian and French plans for the creation of a new Balkan League, which was, initially, to include Turkey as well as most of the states in the peninsula, these efforts had seemed to move alarmingly closer to reality with the Tsar's visit to Constantinople in June. Austria-Hungary's attempts to counter these manoeuvres by an alliance of her own embracing Turkey, Roumania and Bulgaria (as well as Albania), were proving noticeably ineffectual. This stemmed largely from the sheer impracticability of the plan since these states were mutually suspicious of one another, each vying for the same territory—Silistria and the Southern Dobruza in the case of Bulgaria and Roumania and Adrianople and Eastern Thrace in the case of Bulgaria and Turkey. To compound the Monarchy's problems her ally Germany was no use at all since she was pursuing a counter-strategy of her own involving—mirabile dictu—an alliance between Serbia!, the Monarchy's *bête noire*, Roumania and Greece. While the British gave the impression that they wanted to avoid being dragged into another Balkan imbroglio, they were, nevertheless, scarcely being impartial in urging Bulgaria not to become financially entangled with the two Germanic Powers by seeking a loan from them but instead to lean on France and Russia. The government in Vienna was to be additionally disconcerted when it learnt of the British Foreign Office's reaction to an article in the February edition of the *Neue Freie Presse* which voiced the fear that "a second Balkan League could only be a dagger pointed at the heart of Austria as the Serbian Premier Pašić intended." (1). This the Foreign Office concluded was "probably only a ploy to facilitate the passing of a new armaments bill." (2) Then again, if the British did not actually

share the evident Schadenfreude of the French at the failure of the Hungarian Count Tisza's half-hearted attempts to conciliate the Transylvanian Roumanians, nevertheless the consequent weakening of Austria-Hungary's nominal ally (by secret agreement with King Carol) was not unwelcome in the British Foreign Office. From Budapest the Consul-General had reported that true to form "Tisza had offered the Roumanians nothing worth having and will always be prevented from doing so by his associates as well as his natural instincts as a Magyar magnate."(3)

Although Grey attempted to reassure both Germany and Austria that he was by no means a party to these French and Russian manoeuvres aimed at the 'Einkreisung' of the Central Powers, he certainly made no attempt to criticize it - let alone counter it. Although it was true that Grey told the visiting Roumanian statesman, Take Ionescu in June "that he was content with the existing diplomatic alignments in Europe"(4) his attitude of benign benevolence to France and Russia's moves only aroused the deepest suspicions in both Vienna and Berlin. The gravity of the situation could scarcely be underestimated since the ambassador De Bunsen in Vienna duly reported that "if Russia succeeds in acquiring a dominant position in the Balkans there will be great nervousness here and a conflict may break out. Austria pins her hopes on a divided Balkan peninsula."(5) In spite of this candid warning, Nicolson in particular seemed to be more concerned about the respective alliance systems breaking up and was more than willing to connive at Russian and French designs as long as it kept their alliance together. Grey like Tyrell merely seemed "to have hoped" that Russia and Austria-Hungary "might come to an agreement"(6) and pious wishes are scarcely an effective basis for a practical foreign policy as both statesmen knew only too well.

Such hopes proved, not unsurprisingly, to be in vain. De Bunsen's assessment of the situation turned out to be only too accurate. By June 1914 the Ballhausplatz had become increasingly agitated and nervous. Russia's influence over Serbia and Montenegro showed no signs of easing and there was serious talk of a union between the two states which would de facto give Serbia her longed for access to the sea which Berchtold had so assiduously striven to prevent as has been

seen in Chapter V. The circumvention of Berchtold's policy of containment and 'ne plus ultra' vis-a-vis Serbia after her dramatic gains in the years 1912-13 was completely unacceptable. Even more worrying, from Berchtold's point of view, was that contrary to her pledges in 1912, Germany seemed no longer willing to counter such a development and while the Monarchy had failed to win the support of either Bulgaria or Turkey Roumania was clearly moving in the direction of the Entente. Indeed, as the Austro-Hungarian ambassador, Pallavicini, reported from Constantinople, the German Emperor's evident desire to help his brother-in-law, Constantine of Greece to secure as many of the disputed Aegean Islands as he could, was even threatening to drive the Turks into the arms of the Triple Entente.(7)

Interestingly though, while the Militärische Rundschau, along with other elements of the Austrian press in June 1914, was convinced that many of the Monarchy's problems could be ascribed to 'the hidden hand of England' behind the scenes (8), a long memorandum drawn up by Baron Matscheko (9) at Berchtold's instructions offered a more guarded and considered synopsis. While he confirmed the prognosis of Russian and French attempts to create a new Balkan League which could only be directed against the Monarchy- since Serbia would hardly be prepared to make concessions in Macedonia- unless she received a substantial quid pro quo in either the South Slav lands of the Empire or Albania- or both, he personally doubted the idea that Britain could be considered the éminence grise of the affair Matscheko's conclusion was, thus, that the Monarchy should pursue a moderate course, but one based upon firm diplomatic action, involving pressure on Germany to secure an alliance with Bulgaria and- hopefully- Turkey too, while the Hohenzollern King of Roumania should be brought to make a public declaration of support for the Monarchy instead of keeping the alliance between the two countries a state secret, as he had done hitherto.

However, before Berchtold could append his signature to the document, news of the dramatic murders in Sarajevo in Bosnia became known in Vienna. Revolutionary South Slav nationalism in the guise of the Bosnian Serb, Gavrilo Princip had, seemingly, at a stroke, not only killed the Heir-Apparent to the throne and his wife, but also mounted a challenge to the Monarchy's existence

a Great Power per se. (June 28th) This was a gauntlet, which in the view of the Ballhausplatz, the Monarchy had no option but to pick up. Quite clearly, it was felt, purely diplomatic measures would no longer suffice and immediate practical action was called for. Indeed, failure to act against this provocation would be tantamount to declaring *urbi et orbi* that the Empire was no longer to be considered a 'Great Power.' and, as a consequence, no Balkan state could reasonably be expected to form an alliance with it. Thus, instead of merely appending his signature to the document, Berchtold now substantially revised it into a proposal for immediate action. Seven days after the assassination, on July 5th, Berchtold dispatched the memorandum along with a personal letter from the Emperor Franz Joseph to Berlin, stating that it was imperative "to eliminate Serbia as a political power-factor in the Balkans." (10) If this were not actually running the risk of playing 'va banque', it was a decidedly desperate move in which the stakes were very high. If successful, it would transform the political landscape in the Balkans dramatically just as the wars in 1912-13 against Turkey had done, effectively putting an end to any further plans of a Balkan League directed against the Monarchy. Moreover, the defeat of Serbia would also mean the defeat of her mentor, Russia, whose influence Berchtold believed "in the Balkans would be eliminated for a long time." (11) If unsuccessful, however, the results for the Monarchy were potentially catastrophic. While the letter did not specifically call for war, it firmly stated that "the hand of the criminal agitators in Belgrade should not go unpunished." (12) and in a conversation with the German ambassador, Heinrich von Tschirschky, on July 3rd, Berchtold had spoken, ominously, of "a final and fundamental reckoning." (13) Although Tschirschky reacted with extreme caution, asking what exactly did he intend to do with Serbia once conquered, and how would Italy and Roumania react, the German Emperor fully endorsed Berchtold's comments with the marginalia "now or never" and dismissed Tschirschky's warning against "precipitate steps" as "nonsense." (14)

In contrast to the situation in 1912 and 1913 both Empires- Austria-Hungary and Russia- now believed that their very status as Great Powers were at stake and unlike the position in 1908-9

Austria was resolved to proceed, vi et armis, against Serbia, while Russia, for her part, felt up to the challenge of meeting force with force. Naturally, given this scenario, the role of Austria's ally, Germany, would be crucial in either forestalling Russian intervention or, failing that, countering it. That a 'projected Third Balkan War' ran the very high risk of escalating into something far more substantial such as a major European war, was candidly pointed out by the German Under-Secretary of State when he said to Berchtold's colleague: "Yes, 90 percent probability of a European war if you undertake something against Serbia." (15)

Nevertheless, in spite of this warning, on July 7th, the day after Hoyos's return from Berlin with 'the notorious blank cheque' the Council of Ministers agreed overwhelmingly "with settling accounts with Serbia." (16) All those present with the initial exception of Tisza- who later concurred- resolved that since a purely diplomatic victory, even if it humiliated Serbia would be worthless "such demands should be made upon Serbia as to secure their rejection so that a radical solution along the lines of a military solution could be opened up." (17)

In other words as the historian Fritz Fellner has pointed out "in Vienna one decided on war against Serbia on July 7th and all deliberations such as that of the Council of Ministers on July 19th and subsequent diplomatic activity such as the ultimatum of July 23rd and the breaking off of relations on July 25th, to the declaration of war on July 28th were only consistent executions of the basic decision of July 7th." (18)

Although one can say that the Monarchy would almost certainly not gone to war without Germany's guarantee, nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that if Germany presented it, it was Austria-Hungary that cashed it. In extremis media extrema, Austrian statesmen would have argued, but whether the Council of Ministers on that fateful day would have acted the way they did if they had fully realized the dire consequences is open to doubt, just as one might ask if Gavrilo Princip would have fired that fateful shot on June 28th had he even the slightest inkling of the consequences of his action?

Given these circumstances, Berchtold's desire to be sure of

Germany's support was perfectly intelligible but it seems- perhaps somewhat curiously- that together with the threat of German retaliation against Russia, the possibility of British neutrality might have a similar enervating influence on the Tsar and his government. Naturally, it is difficult to gauge exactly to what extent this factor influenced the decision-makers in Vienna and Budapest. Here, of course, comes into play, the perennial question of what precisely is to be understood by the term 'Entente' as opposed to the more definitive term 'Alliance'? 'Dual Alliance'- Russia/France, understood; 'Triple Alliance'- Germany/Austria and Italy - at least in theory- equally- but 'Entente' as in 'Triple Entente'? Understanding? No wonder that both the French and German ambassadors were disconcerted when Grey said to the former, Paul Cambon: "You can't count on our coming in" and to the latter, Karl von Lichnowsky: "You can't count on our staying out." To think that in those fateful days at the end of July that the diplomatic representatives of two of the principal protagonists in a potentially catastrophic European war were reduced to almost 'second-guessing' which way Britain would jump- if at all, is staggering to say the least. This naturally puts an awful degree of responsibility on the shoulders of the British Foreign Secretary, as the Introduction has indicated. The fact that Grey later failed to proffer a satisfactory explanation as to why he changed his mind about the avoidability of war to the Austrian historian Pribam in 1926 has left the door open to all manner of speculation.(19a)

En passant, one might add, that foreign observers have often been puzzled too by the British parliamentary tradition of 'conventions' as opposed to continental hard and fast 'rules and regulations.

It was certainly true that in a conference of ministers shortly after the outbreak of war on August 8th that Count Tisza roundly castigated the German invasion of Belgium for provoking Britain's intervention and for Italy's subsequent declaration of neutrality.(19)

One of the most revealing pieces of information about the views of Austro-Hungarian statesmen and officials vis-à-vis Britain on the eve of the war comes from the pen of the publicist Berthold Molden.(20) In this memorandum drawn up for the

Ballhausplatz.(20) This document represented a curious *mélange* of abstract calculations and downright wishful thinking and completely at variance with Count Mensdorff's infinitely more realistic appraisal of Britain's actual attachment to the Triple Entente. In Molden's view it was not to be assumed that England should regard a general European war as being in her best interests since for her a Russian victory would likely prove to be just as unpalatable as a German one. and therefore she would strive to the utmost to ensure that a war would remain a purely local one between Austria and Serbia. Thus:

Logically (vernünftigerweise) England must greet with joy the defeat of Serbia and the moral defeat of Russia that it would entail, for British politicians would have to be blind to fail to see that Russia's success would mean the hegemony of the Tsardom over the whole area between the German frontier and India.(21)

A more serious misreading of Britain's political stance it would be difficult to conceive. That there were considerable misgivings- fear even- at Russia's ultimate intentions in the Foreign Office was accurate enough but, unfortunately, for Molden he forgot to consider that Britain might in consequence be drawn to a totally different conclusion from the one he anticipated. i.e. that Britain must seek come what may to appease Russia in Europe in order to maintain the Entente of 1907 in the interests of Britain's Empire in Asia. Failure to consider this aspect- Britain's over-riding concern for India, Persia and Tibet meant that even if Austria-Hungary had not pursued what may loosely be termed as an 'aggressive' policy in 1914, she could scarcely have counted on any British diplomatic support in a conflict with Russia, even less so if the conflict became a military one. And this for the very obvious reason that were Germany to conquer France and Russia and thereby come to dominate the continent of Europe this would represent a more direct and immediate threat to Britain than any potential future threats to British imperial interests by Russia in Asia.

It was to Austria-Hungary's great misfortune that Berchtold chose to act on the basis of Molden's bland assumptions than the more perceptive and accurate assessment by Count Mensdorff who being resident in London had 'his finger on the pulse', so to speak. Quite astoundingly, one might say, Mensdorff's views were

paid no more attention by Berchtold than they had been by his predecessor Aehrenthal in 1908.(22) Mensdorff was merely instructed to do what he could to secure favourable coverage in the British press- in which he had a similar lack of success. Again like Aehrenthal, Berchtold made no attempt to keep the British government au courant with what he was doing but this, one must say, is because he had little faith in the even-handedness of Britain- that they were now effectively *parti pris* on the side of Russia and France. Indeed it was a moot point: how far could Britain be neutral? Obviously, on this question, in spite of Molden's favourable gloss on Britain's probable reaction, Berchtold had serious qualms about the reaction of both Britain and Europe - hence the importance of Hoyos's mission to Berlin. This, of course, was in marked contrast to the situation in 1908 at the time of the Bosnian crisis when Aehrenthal had displayed a remarkable degree of optimism and confidence. Clear evidence of Berchtold's pessimism can be garnered from the fact that the Austro-Hungarian government devoted some three weeks assiduously gathering proof of what it believed to be the mendaciousness of Serbia's claims to have been pursuing a policy of 'good-neighbourliness' since 1909.

Secrecy and surprise now constituted two major diplomatic weapons in Berchtold's armoury in July 1914. Hence, it was no accident that the memorandum and letter were carried to Berlin in secret by Count Hoyos, a close personal friend and his *chef de cabinet*. Hoyos was decidedly what would be termed in modern parlance 'a hawk' and thus, *ipso facto* the Germans knew that Vienna was resolved on military action- the choice of emissary was proof enough. Moreover, in choosing Hoyos Berchtold had a further dual purpose- he neatly circumvented any further negative intrusions by Count Tisza and he by-passed the staid and exceedingly cautious Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Berlin, Szögyeny. Thus, *ab initio* the secret mission had only one purpose, and that was, as Conrad von Hötzendorff in his usual irrepressible fashion put it: "War, war, war."(23)

That Berchtold had no intention of referring the matter to the Concert of Europe was not completely surprising since it was

fully in keeping with the strong language that he had been using in Belgrade (as has been seen in the previous chapter) and indeed with successful results in spite of protests from the Entente Powers since October 1913.

Paradoxically, though, and ironically too, this merely served to heighten the very hostility that he was trying to circumvent. The assassination of Franz Ferdinand and his wife had seen a wave of sympathy for the Monarchy on the part of the British court, cabinet, parliament and press alike but there was considerable anxiety in the Foreign Office that the murders might very well be utilized for some dramatic action against Serbia by the war-party in Vienna and this suspicion, it must be said, had a firm foundation. Thus, as one senior Habsburg diplomat was candid enough to say: "Precious fruits for the Monarchy were to ripen from Franz Ferdinand's spilled blood." (24) And Baron Leopold von Andrian-Werburg was by no means alone in thinking that the Heir-Apparent's death could be put to great political advantage and that his death was additionally a boon for the Magyar aristocracy given his quasi-visceral hatred for them. De Bunsen, the British ambassador, in Vienna, for one, could not help but recall the unsavoury revelations of the Friedjung and Vasić trials in 1910 where it had been proved conclusively that forged documents had been used as a pretext for accusing the Serbo-Croatian Coalition of treasonable dealings with the government in Belgrade. There had been the mainstay of the evidence in the Agram/Zagreb Treason Trial of the previous year- Vasić having forged them and the historian Friedjung having authenticated them. (Although Aehrenthal had denied all complicity, Crowe for one did not believe him.)

Initially, Grey's reaction had been to advise the Russian government to adopt a cautious response provided that the Monarchy acted reasonably in her demands on Serbia but the demand for Austro-Hungarian officials to be allowed to investigate the ramifications of the Black Hand conspiracy on Serbian soil was such a flagrant violation of Serbian state sovereignty that "not even the smallest state like San Marino could accept." (25) And as Franz Joseph ruefully noted when he read the terms of the ultimatum of July 23rd: "Russia cannot possibly swallow this

note."(26) Vienna's hurried action after July 23rd with the Serbian government being given merely 48 hours to respond with either a yea or a nay to the ultimatum as a whole, precluding any further discussion, was scarcely 'reasonable' in Grey's view. The implications for Russia's prestige were, of course, enormous - and indeed the Russian Foreign Minister, Sazonov had pointedly told the Austro-Hungarian ambassador that there was no way Russia could accept it, since to do so was to condemn Serbia to being a satellite of Austria-Hungary.(27) Grey's unusually forthright tone to Mensdorff was a clear indication of his irritation and the decision by Grey and Churchill as the First Lord of the Admiralty to keep the First and Second fleets in a state of readiness after the conclusion of the naval exercises was a demonstration of "the anxiety under which the whole of Europe has been placed by the Austrian action."(28) Grey added that "the news seemed to me to be very bad for the peace of Europe."(29)

Grey, in fact, came to make a striking condemnation of Austro-Hungarian behaviour at this time, saying that "the Powers were not allowed to help in getting satisfaction for Austria.. and European peace was at stake."(30) And indeed confirmation of this stance was provided by Berchtold himself when, asking the Emperor for a declaration of war on July 27th, he openly stated that he did so because "he did not consider it impossible that the Triple Entente might yet undertake an attempt to reach a peaceful resolution of the conflict, if a clearing of the air was not made by way of a declaration of war."(31) However, the reasons for this can be adduced from what has been said before i.e. from Berchtold's exasperation with the Concert for failing to effectively counter Serbia's ambitions in the Balkan Wars in which the promise that no territorial changes would be permitted had been flagrantly violated - and when the Powers did move over the question of Albania's frontiers and the fate of Scutari, in the case of France half-heartedly, and notably Russia not at all. It had taken the threat of unilateral action by the Monarchy to safeguard at least some of her strategic interests. If the conclusion of the Balkan Wars was anything to go by than a "peaceful resolution" of the latest conflict with Serbia would once again be to the Monarchy's detriment and Serbia would be let to try again later to satisfy her territorial ambitions at the

next- from her point of view- favourable opportunity. Metaphorically speaking a kind of 'Sword of Damocles' was constantly hanging over the head of the Monarchy and in this respect Berchtold had reluctantly come to the conclusion that perhaps Conrad von Hötzenndorff had been right all along; failure 'to take the bull by the horns', whether in 1908, 1911 or 1912-3 had merely postponed the 'dies irae' with Serbia not thwarted it. That is why the Council of Ministers on July 7th had overwhelmingly decided that a purely diplomatic victory over Serbia, even a humiliating one- would be a hollow victory. If temporarily floored she would be bound to rise again- hence the Kaiser's remark: "Now or never!" Similarly, one might add, a significant number of Germany's political and military leaders viewed their predicament- whether they were right to do so is, of course, another matter. Their predicament was seen as being on a much greater scale-i.e the growing power both militarily but also economically of France and Russia- particularly Russia. This was such that in the view of von Moltke for one that by 1917 Germany would have effectively little option but 'to throw in the towel.' For the moment she too had 'a window of opportunity' to meet and defeat the ever growing threat to her position in Europe but only if she struck quickly in a kind of pre-emptive strike. In this respect one can say that Berlin took advantage of Vienna's predicament for end of her own which as Chapter VII will illustrate was hardly in keeping with the Monarchy's long term interests at all.

Certainly, to Crowe and Nicolson there was no doubt that "whatever we may think of the Austrian charges against Serbia, France and Russia consider that these are pretexts and that the bigger cause of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente is definitely engaged." (32) It was certainly this aspect of the question that most concerned Grey which was why he felt impelled to tell the Cabinet that the Austro-Hungarian note to Serbia was "the gravest event for many years past in Europe." (33) As in the dispute over Scutari in 1913 it was not the merits or otherwise of the question that concerned Grey the year previously but the wider implications of the affair. Thus Grey could actually say to Mensdorff: "If Austria-Hungary could make war on Serbia, and

at the same time satisfy Russia" Grey remarked to Mensdorff on July 27th, "well and good, I could take a holiday tomorrow. But if not, the consequences were incalculable." (34) This was assuredly an extraordinary thing for Grey to say, for he must have known that to declare war on Serbia and simultaneously satisfy Russia was as feasible as trying to square the circle.

Nevertheless, it must be said that Grey made an effort to avert such consequences by making proposals for four Power mediation, probably encouraged by his experiences during the Balkan Wars, although by now it was evident that Mensdorff had lost all faith in the Concert as has been seen. However, even if the Germans had supported them which they singularly failed to do the likelihood of their being successful was highly problematic. For clearly Austria's perspective on Balkan affairs was quite different from that of the British and it was to ensure that the Monarchy did not suffer any more diplomatic defeats that Berchtold acted as quickly as he did and refused to consider any intervention by the Powers as in 1913. Then again the German proposal for 'localization' of the conflict, which seemed *prima facie* reasonable enough was rejected by the British side on the grounds that, in Nicolson's words, this was tantamount "to joining in to hold the ring while Austria strangles Serbia." (35) Once again imperial Realpolitik dominated here. In Whitehall the overwhelming sentiment was that to abandon Russia at this juncture would almost certainly risk the re-establishment of the Dreikaiserbund and a renewed challenge to Britain's imperial position in Asia. Grey, on his part hoped to resolve the appalling dilemma of either deserting Russia- which he was most unlikely to do- or to commit Britain to a war which at this stage would have little support either in parliament or the country at large, as has been seen in Chapter VI, by advising the Austrians to negotiate directly with Russia. When in fact talks between Vienna and St. Petersburg did begin on July 30th Grey even went so far as to urge Russia to cease her mobilization which had begun on the night of July 25th-26th-the so-called 'period preparatory to war'- and negotiate in earnest. This was on the face of it a remarkable breach of Entente solidarity which caused some alarm in St. Petersburg just as Grey's comments to Cambon and Lichnowsky a few days previously had caused confusion.

This was, perhaps, even more remarkable in that Austria-Hungary was still directing military operations against Serbia, shelling Belgrade, for example, on July 29th. Naturally all the while this was happening, Sazonov refused, not unsurprisingly, to engage in any meaningful discussions. At this juncture Germany now dramatically intervened and Grey was forced to conclude effectively "banged the door on negotiations by attacking Russia" and thus "putting an end to these 'good hopes' of peace." (36)

As far as Grey and the Foreign Office were now concerned the crisis had far surpassed the bounds of purely Anglo-Austrian relations, and as a result of Germany's action the political Scenario was, so to speak, 'a totally different ball-game.' With probably the notable exception of Crowe and Nicolson, few members of the Foreign Office wanted to support Russia in a strictly Austro-Serbian dispute even though the British ambassador in St. Petersburg, Sir George Buchanan, had constantly urged this policy for, he argued, "if we fail her (Russia) now, we cannot hope to maintain that friendly co-operation with her in Asia that is of such vital importance to us." (37) Certainly, Grey would have endorsed these sentiments which was, arguably, the real leitmotif of his foreign policy rather than the so-named 'balance of power' as traditionally understood- and as Paul Schröder has cogently argued. However, until now he had adopted an aura of detachment and ambivalence, even, one might argue, adopting a somewhat ostrich-like attitude 'burying his head in the sand' as he had often done in Balkan questions since 1912- in the hope that somehow Russia and Austria-Hungary might come to a modus vivendi. From Austria's point of view, however, Grey's seeming disinterestedness and detachment concealed a veritable 'mask of Janus' since it was evident to Berchtold and the Austrian Foreign Office that Grey was essentially part pris on the side of Russia and France, because of those very imperial concerns.

However, the German declaration of war on Russia and France at the beginning of August, effectively, cut the Gordian knot of dilemmas for Grey since it allowed him to seemingly be reverting to that traditional balance of power policy that had been the mainstay of British Foreign Office thinking for over

200 years. It seemed, at first, that Grey might very well have to pay the penalty for his continual failure to keep both parliament and the public abreast of his and the Foreign Office's thinking by threatening to resign if the Cabinet declared for a policy of neutrality as the Germans hoped. As has been seen Grey had reigned supreme at the Foreign Office with like-minded subordinates and had scarcely been challenged in his conduct of foreign affairs by any other cabinet members whose knowledge of the subject disconcertedly lamentable. As late as August 3rd half of the Liberal party remained unconvinced that the maintenance of the independence of France was of vital concern for Britain. But once again the Germans 'pulled the rabbit out of the hat' for Grey and he was able to take the majority of the Cabinet with him into the war with the exception of Morley and Burns who believed that even the invasion of Belgium did not merit Britain's involvement.(August 4th)(38)

Even the King George V was impressed who had originally as recent as June given the Kaiser's brother the distinct impression that Britain would try and stay neutral in any conflict between France and Germany. In fact, George went to some trouble to explain to Mensdorff that Britain had not gone to war over the question of Austria's quarrel with Serbia but for the sake of protecting France's northern coast and Belgium's neutrality.(39) Hearing this Mensdorff dared to hope that the two theatres of war in the East and West could thus be kept separate and he told the King, "I don't see how hostilities between us can in fact take place unless you send your fleet to bombard our coast in the Adriatic." The King tried to put a favourable gloss on that score but had to add that on the whole he was not optimistic for "you being at war with Russia and we with Germany, if we don't come to blows it certainly shows a great desire to maintain our friendship."(40)

Even so, it was not until August 12th, more than a week after the actual outbreak of war between Britain and Germany, and practically a fortnight after the outbreak of war between Germany and Britain's Entente partners, Russia and France, that the two empires 'came to blows.' Several members of the Foreign Office, in particular Crowe, believed that a declaration of war

against Austria-Hungary should be made as soon as possible since he maintained that "the technical and futile contention that the two countries were still at peace was presenting 'administrative difficulties.'"(41) Apparently, the prize courts, for one, were at a loss to know what to do about the Austro-Hungarian merchant ships which were being detained in British harbours as well as on the High Seas.(42) Then again, reports were coming in from Cairo that the Austro-Hungarian diplomats there were striving not only to incite the Khedive against the British but the Ottomans too. Meanwhile, the Russians for their part were anxiously pressing for demonstration of naval support by Britain fearing that ever since Austria-Hungary's declaration of war on August 6th the Austro-Hungarian fleet might very well be sent to the Black Sea to reinforce the German cruisers, Groeben and Breslau that had sought refuge in Turkish waters. Together they might seriously threaten not only coastal cities like Odessa but even the naval base of Sebastopol. Grey responded by saying that the Admiralty had argued- and he concurred-that all the while the French Mediterranean fleet was occupied in transporting troops from North Africa to France "it would be inadvisable to provoke a clash with a numerically stronger Austro-Hungarian fleet in possession of four dreadnoughts while Britain had none."(43)

Not that there remained any doubt, of course, as to the ultimate issue. As will be seen Grey was quick to second Russia's offer of Transylvania to Roumania along with French and Russian offers of the Tyrol and territory on the Adriatic to Italy "much of which is already Italian in race and feeling."(44) Since consistency of political principle is often swept aside by the exigences of war, Grey readily agreed to the cession of territory in Albania (Valona)- a neutral state like Belgium one might add, created by the Concert scarcely a year before. Obviously these aims could not be achieved except through a 'fight to the death' with the Dual Monarchy, which to paraphrase Dylan Thomas 'could hardly be expected to pass quietly into the night of political oblivion without screaming at the dying of the light.' Whatever the expressions of regret at the ending of the traditional friendship on the part of George V and Grey this evidently did not inhibit them from discussing the expected

funeral arrangements and possible division of the estate. (One is reminded on this score of the remark of Frederick the Great a propos the report that Maria Theresa had wept at the partition of Poland between Austria, his country, Prussia and Russia: "She wept but she took her share." (Sie hat geweint aber sie hat ihres Teil genommen.)

By August 10th the French had finally finished transporting their troops to France from North Africa and intended to attack the Austro-Hungarian fleet without further to do, but Grey insisted on a formal declaration of war. In fact, Grey had already asked the Austrians not to open formal hostilities until such a declaration was made, which it was on the 12th. This was in effect the swan-song of the diplomatic niceties that had marked the relations between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain for so long and which only episodes like the Bosnian crisis of 1908 had marred. As it happened this swan-song had a touching personal sequel. The British tried to make things easier for the departing Austro-Hungarian ambassador, Count Mensdorff and his staff. Mensdorff's royal relations—"his affectionate cousins and sincere friends, George and Mary"(45) were visibly shaken and Queen Alexandra openly wept as she kissed him goodbye. Mensdorff was inundated with messages of goodwill and letters of condolence from country houses and the cosmopolitan society of London where he had been such a popular figure and where affection for the Monarchy still largely survived, in contrast to the Realpolitiker of the Foreign Office. But that being said, even in the Foreign Office there was some sadness. Nicolson, who rarely wore his heart on his sleeve, was deeply moved and Grey himself had trouble in keeping back the tears. Mensdorff's departure was set for August 18th and George V sent his chamberlain to the station where Grey and his whole secretariat were waiting. Spontaneous cries of "Three cheers for Count Mensdorff!" went up from the crowds. The ambassador and his entourage—some 240 persons in all—travelled by ship to Genoa where a British warship greeted them with the signal: "The British navy present their compliments to Your Excellency and hope to see you again soon." (46) This was at least some consolation for a staunch Anglophile who had spent 10 years in the cause of Anglo-Austrian amity and who now had to reflect on the irony of history that he "should be the first Austrian ambassador in history to leave London after a declaration of war." (47)

PART II
GREAT BRITAIN AND AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

ATTITUDES AT
THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

On June 28th 1914, the Austro-Hungarian Heir-Apparent, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, were assassinated by the Bosnian Serb, Prinzip, in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. At the time the event attracted surprisingly little attention and was even regarded in British government circles as but one more irritating incident for which the Balkans were proverbial. Nicolson, for one, wrote to Buchanan in St. Petersburg and de Bunsen in Vienna, merely hoping that the tragedy would not lead to "further complications." (1) Most people's attention in Britain was in fact rivetted on events closer to home: the Women's Suffrage Movement and the conflict between the Liberal government and the Ulster Unionists over Irish Home Rule- or 'Rome Rule', as the latter preferred to call it. Conservative backing for Edward Carson's Unionists and the mutiny at the Curragh Barracks when British officers refused to disarm them raised the very real prospect of civil war. In comparison a far off incident in Bosnia seemed of little consequence. Both metaphorically and literally too Britain was facing a long, hot summer.

News of Austria's harsh ultimatum to Serbia on July 23rd ("the most formidable document which has ever been addressed to an independent state", in the words of Sir Edward Grey (1a)) was, in contrast, received with remarkable coolness by the bulk of the British press. The Manchester Guardian for one thought that actual war between the two countries was highly unlikely and the danger of other countries becoming involved even less so. (1b) The only exception amongst Britain's leading newspapers was the Conservative Morning-Post, which, mirabile dictu, had actually been advocating British intervention in an assumed wider conflict on July 21st, two days before the terms of the ultimatum became known. (2)

At this juncture, the establishment paper par excellence- The Times- came to play a crucial role in the crisis that was now developing. The chief proprietor of The Times was Lord Northcliffe, who had been arguing for some years that the new German Reich forged by Bismarck in 1866-71 represented a

growing threat to Britain and the British Empire. This political Weltanschauung found substantial support both from the editor, Geoffrey Dawson but more particularly the paper's foreign editor, Henry Wickham Steed. The Times had large financial resources and part of these resources had been utilized to develop a Europe-wide intelligence service which had no equal in the rest of the British press. Two of the paper's most important correspondents were Valentine Chirol in Berlin and George Saunders in Paris and both of them helped to reinforce Northcliffe's fears that Germany's ultimate aim was indeed world domination at the expense of the British Empire.(3)

When the full facts about Austria-Hungary's demands on Serbia became known, involving as they did a definite infringement of Serbian sovereignty, The Times devoted considerable space to explaining to its readers the full implications of what was happening in the Balkans and why it was inconceivable that Britain could just stand by on the sidelines. For Northcliffe and the paper's leading personnel, Germany now represented a similar threat to Napoleonic France in the previous century, aiming no less at Hegemony in Europe as a prelude to world domination. The prestige of The Times was so great that before long The Pall Mall Gazette was adopting a similar line (4), while The Morning Post was declaring that although war was bad, there was something worse: standing by, while France and Russia on the one hand and Austria-Hungary and Germany on the other, decided the fate of Europe between them.

Other Conservative supporting newspapers such as The Globe and The Daily Telegraph soon joined in the interventionist cause while, in contrast, the main Liberal newspaper, The Manchester Guardian, under its celebrated editor, C.P. Snow, remained resolutely opposed to it. Snow maintained that war was by no means imminent but even if it were, it was not in Britain's interest to get involved, contrary to what the right-wing press were saying.(6)

As far as the Guardian was concerned all the problems that had bedevilled international relations over the last few years were due to the two pernicious alliance systems, which had been

forged behind the peoples' backs without their consent:

"The spectacle of Europe being driven by the hard logic of its diplomatic system to a struggle which no one wants and catastrophe which everyone foresees has no historical analogies and none of the glittering accessories which we associate with the idea of nations going forth to war. Three hundred million people today lie under the spell of fear and is there no one to break the spell, no gleam of light on this cold, dark scene?"(7)

The Liberal press in general was extremely critical of both Serbia and Russia, regarding them as backward countries that were the fons et origo of all the problems plaguing the Balkans. A war between Austria and Serbia would be a misfortune without doubt but its European significance would be little unless Britain were to join in and make it otherwise. After all, the Balkans hardly entered the mental horizon of most British people. In the words of The Manchester Guardian: "We care as little for Belgrade as Belgrade does for Manchester."(8) In fact the paper even went so far as to say that "Serbia should be taken out into the middle of the ocean and sunk"(9)- a far from Liberal sentiment, one would have thought. A.G. Gardiner of the Daily News was equally scathing, saying: "We must not have our Western civilization submerged in a sea of blood to wash out a Serbian conspiracy."(10) The Nation added to this vituperation with the comment that "Serbia's fame rests on a regicide and its victories on a fratricidal war."(A reference to the murder of King Alexander Obrenović in 1903 and the war with Bulgaria in 1913)(11) Hardly had the war begun, then The Nation remarked bitterly: "We, in particular, are at war on behalf of France, the noblest member of the European family, and for Serbia the basest."(12) The Yorkshire Post, too, quickly added its contempt for the small Balkan state, saying:

"For our part, we declare that we have no time for any 'so-called oppressed Slav nations', who seem to expend all their energies in constantly arming, drilling and converting fertile territories into Golgothas (places of skulls) rather than emulating one another in art, industry and trade."(13)

As July advanced and war became more and more likely the Guardian published a large number of letters which not only advocated neutrality but also displayed a marked antipathy to

both "backward Russia and Serbia." Germany, on the other hand, was continually praised as "a bulwark of civilization." In any case, Britain's commercial and economic interests definitely precluded any participation in any "continental imbroglio." (14)

Parliament, too, was far from convinced of the need for British involvement and Sir Edward Grey's speech to the House of Commons on August 3rd when he spoke of "British interests.. honour..obligations" was received in stony silence by both government and opposition benches alike. Embarrassingly for Grey hardly any M.P. could be found to speak in his support. (15)

Hostility to Russia and Serbia and sympathy for Germany was commonplace in left-wing circles. As far as radicals and socialists were concerned both Slav states were nothing short of barbarous. Thus, on July 31st, the Daily News declared:

"Let us be perfectly clear at any rate, that what we are agreed to do is to strike a blow at western culture in order to bolster up the infinitely lower culture of Eastern Europe. To this it will doubtlessly be objected that in an international war from which Heaven save us Germany and France will be flying at one another's throats, it will be our duty, on grounds of policy and of loyalty to take part in the struggle. The objection does not disturb the main contention, The French and the Germans are Western peoples and whichever is victor will continue to uphold the principles on which Western civilization rests. The triumph of the Triple Alliance would be primarily a triumph of the highest culture whereas the triumph of Russia and Serbia would be that of the debased civilization of Eastern Europe and of a church which has done less than any other for cultural freedom and intellectual enlightenment. Are we prepared to assist the forces of ignorance, reaction and tyranny?" (16)

This general contempt for the political and cultural backwardness of Eastern Europe figured prominently in the writings of radicals like H.N. Brailsford, who wrote in The Nation on August 29th 1914:

"Servia is not exactly a credit to civilization and one cannot say that her political extinction would be a serious loss for Europe." (17)

A whole flurry of letters were in fact to appear in all the major British newspapers, seriously questioning the alliance with Russia and the 'semi-barbaric East. One correspondent in the Labour Leader went so far as to say that even if Germany should invade Belgium in her campaign against

France, this should not be taken as a casus belli; rather Britain should declare against Russia-"that barbaric power and her tyrannous ruler, the Cossack outrager of women."(18)

These sentiments were common to the letters' columns of radical and conservative papers alike. A typical example appeared in the Guardian on July 30th:

"We should find that in destroying Germany we had broken down one of the bulwarks of the world's civilization and given Europe back to the beast."(19)

This view was strongly endorsed by the paper's Editorial:

"We have not seen a shred of evidence for believing that the triumph of Germany in a European war in which we had been neutral would injure a single British interest, however small, whereas the triumph of Russia would create a situation for us really formidable."(20)

The Times printed a similar argument by Norman Angell the following day. Any war with Germany, he maintained, would be an unmitigated disaster for the cause of progress and civilization for it would mean:

"The replacement of a country of 65,000,000 highly civilized citizens given to the arts of trade and commerce by a Slavonic federation of, say, 200,000,000 autocratically governed people, with a very rudimentary civilization."(21)

On August 1st both The Times and The Manchester Guardian published a letter, entitled intriguingly, 'A Scholar's Protest' (conceivably, R.W. Seton-Watson?), declaring that a war against Germany "in the interests of Servia and Russia" would be "a sin against Civilization itself."(22)

With the actual outbreak of war both the Liberal and the radical press toned down their disparaging remarks about Russia and Serbia, but, in essence they never altered their favourable view of Germany or their negative one of the slavonic states. Since it had now become scarcely politic to criticize the war directly, Liberals and Radicals devoted their energies to opposing any extension of the war and to advocating a compromise peace. More importantly, and more germane to our purposes here, the majority of the Liberal and Socialist press, in contrast to the Conservative, was strenuously opposed to any attempts to disrupt the Habsburg Monarchy for fear that this might prolong the war. Prima facie, Liberal journalists like H.W. Massingham

and politicians such as John Burns and John Morley found themselves in the somewhat paradoxical position of having condemned Britain's war against the two small Boer republics in South Africa in 1899-1902, now trying to excuse Austria-Hungary and Germany's attack on Serbia and Belgium. If 'excuse' is not the mot juste then they certainly were reluctant to find fault with them. For Liberals, of course, there was an underlying ideological and philosophical problem here. The traditional Liberal desiderata of peaceful reform and progress find themselves at odds with the demands of war since liberty and freedom of the individual is invariably curtailed by governments in the name of the 'national interest'. Crucially, too, if victory come, it does not do so through the cherished Liberal postulates of reason and compromise but by force majeure. This is not say that Liberals did not have sympathy for supposedly 'oppressed' small nations (the Boer War proved they did), nevertheless their dislike of war was overwhelming. It kindled the worst possible emotions of fear and hatred and led to death and destruction on a vast scale. Not only destructive of people and property it was also the destroyer of 'financial rectitude and probity.' Consequently, Liberals of the Cobden-Bright tradition in particular, could only have a reluctant sympathy for a war waged in the name of 'the rights of nationality' while Burns and Morley were, in fact, openly hostile to the claims of the small nationalities of the Habsburg Empire and wanted to make 'peace the sooner the better' the main plank of the Liberal programme.

Conservatives, in contrast, did not find themselves bedevilled by the dilemmas that disturbed the consciences of Liberals. As far as they were concerned the issue was a fairly straightforward one: Britain was faced with a life or death struggle with the evil of 'Prussianism' which, having conquered Germany in 1866-71, was now threatening to do the same to the whole of Europe. Thus, if the price of defeating 'Prussianized Germany' was the disruption and indeed ultimate dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire, then so be it. Such a radical prospect was hardly in tune with conservative principles as traditionally understood, but then these would have to take second place to

the need to win the war, which outweighed all other considerations. Since tactics rather than principles were now paramount with Conservatives, it was scarcely surprising that they could so easily wash their hands of the small nation states created out of the body of the Monarchy after the war in the so-called 'age of appeasement.'

The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand ultimately came to concentrate peoples' attention on the affairs of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as never before. While Robert Seton-Watson still displayed considerable sympathy for the Habsburgs, as his valedictory article for the Heir-Apparent demonstrated, others like Murray Beaven, writing on Austrian policy in the Oxford Pamphlets for the War series, adopted a highly negative stance. While he acknowledged the former community of interest that had united Britain and Austria in the past, notably the struggle against Napoleon, this bond had now dissolved and the rise of the 'Nationality Question' had completely altered the political landscape. *Tempora mutant et mutamus illis*. For Murray the Habsburg Monarchy was no longer a 'European necessity', as Palacký had described it- on the contrary, it was a danger to it. It was in fact now "the firebrand among the nations, whose extinction must be the indispensable preliminary to the restitution of tranquillity in Europe." Austria-Hungary's alliance with Germany was further proof, Beaven argued, that the Empire had to go.(23)

Beaven was in fact one of the earliest exponents of the 'Austria delenda est' school- a school which was to be so effectively championed by Seton-Watson, his former views notwithstanding. (What is it that William Cowper once wrote about 'Love to Hatred turned'?) (24) The first few months of the war witnessed a considerable wave of sympathy for the 'oppressed small nations of Europe' and there was no question that Germany's invasion of Belgium had a genuinely shocking effect on British public opinion, which even the Liberal press, so loathe to support a war, had to acknowledge. Many of the Liberal M.P.'s in parliament came round to Grey's declared view that if Britain tolerated the flagrant violation of an internationally agreed treaty such as that which had guaranteed the permanent neutrality of Belgium in 1839, then the flood gates to anarchy

would be opened and the very foundations of civilization undermined.(25) The sacking of the city of Louvain, in particular, caused a wave of popular indignation in Britain, and dismayed Austro-Hungarian statesmen like Count Andr  ssy, son of the famous Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Julius Andr  ssy. The Times lived up to its sobriquet 'The Thunderer' by exclaiming: "The wickedness of this abominable act shall be expiated to the uttermost when the day of reckoning comes." (26) In Andr  ssy's view whatever claims the Central Powers originally had to the moral high ground after Franz Ferdinand's death had been "irreparably damaged by this one senseless act. It was not only a crime but a serious political mistake." (27) (Echoes here, of course, of the assassination of the   migr  , the Duc d'Enghien, during the French Revolution: *c'  tait plus qu'un crime, c'  tait une faute.*) Highly scathing cartoons now began to appear in papers like the Westminster Gazette, where the Kaiser was portrayed as the Ancient Mariner with an albatross labelled 'Belgium' fastened round his neck. (28) The poet, Rupert Brooke, was so appalled by the alleged atrocities at Louvain that he wrote to a friend in New York:

"And- apart from the tragedy- I've never felt happier or better in my life, than those days in Belgium. And now I've a feeling of anger at a seen wrong- Belgium- to make me happier and more resolved in my work. I know that whatever happens, I'll be doing some good, fighting to prevent that." (29)

(Somewhat strange, one might add, that a foreign tragedy should inspire personal happiness.) Be that as it may, it was not long before the journalist, C. Ernest Fayle was also advocating the overthrow of the Habsburg Monarchy. To avoid future wars, he argued, the Austro-Hungarian Empire would have to be divided "on lines of natural development"- by which, of course, he meant 'national lines.' Like Beaven, Fayle was now convinced that since the Monarchy was a supranational political entity, it was, as Francis Joseph himself had acknowledged, "an anomaly" in the world of nation-states, at odds with the modern 'Zeitgeist'- so to speak- and would, therefore, have to go. Indeed, as early as August 20th 1914, the Manchester Guardian was declaring that the break-up of the polyglot Habsburg Empire, a completely artificial state, had been predicted and

anticipated for a long time. This was scarcely surprising the paper maintained, once nationalism and national feeling had come to exercise such a powerful hold on peoples' minds during the course of the 19th century. If the war were to hasten this "inevitable process" then neither "humanity at large" nor "the individual peoples of the Monarchy" would be any the worse for its collapse and ultimate disappearance.(30) Indeed, the paper argued that since in the passage of time the Empire had lost whatever *raison d'être* it might once have had; the rule of the Habsburgs had become decidedly oppressive and, as a result, their overthrow would actually be welcomed by the majority of their subjects. In support of this contention the Guardian printed a long article by one of Russia's leading Liberal politicians, Paul Milyukov (later Foreign Minister in the Provisional Government of 1917) which argued that the Allied Powers should make the dismemberment of the Monarchy an official war aim in the interest of the subject peoples.(31)

The Morning Post also began to move towards an anti-Habsburg position when it declared on August 18th that "the Monarchy seemed to be a machine for crushing out souls of nations." (32) Spenser Wilkinson, the paper's military correspondent was to be even more forthright, saying quite candidly that "Austria-Hungary should be broken up in order to satisfy the aspirations of its nationalities." (33) There could be little doubt that the Morning Post's changing attitude was directly related to the military successes of the so-called 'Russian steamroller' which although checked at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes in East Prussia, had, nevertheless, succeeded in overrunning a large part of East Galicia, seizing Lemberg (Lvov) on September 3rd and then the important fortress of Przemyśl, the following Spring.(1915) On September 26th the paper published a leading article entitled 'Austria was' which would not have been out of place in the paper's obituary column. The first part was comparatively restrained, saying "that it would be idle to speculate upon the fate which is reserved for that ancient and unhappy Empire" but the second half was almost apocalyptic, roundly declaring:

"It is no longer in the power of Austria to stop the invader and it can hardly be unsafe to predict that the racial mosaic of the Dual Monarchy will be shattered into pieces to form new, and, we may hope more stable and fortunate combinations in the map of Europe." (34)

The Times, in contrast, did not actually discuss the possible fate of the Empire until the winter of 1914/15 when a leading article of December 2nd 1914 declared that the Monarchy's "Nationality Problems" were one of the prime causes of the war. On January 20th 1915 there appeared an important article, entitled 'The Nemesis of Hungary' under the inscription "By a Former Correspondent of The Times in Austria-Hungary", which could be none other than Henry Wickham Steed. In it Steed set down in more succinct form the arguments that he had advanced in his magnum opus, *The Habsburg Monarchy*. "The Dualist System", he argued was "the bedrock" of the polyglot Danubian Empire and the fons et origo of all the oppression suffered by its subject peoples. Taking the argument further, he now maintained that this System was part and parcel of a much more insidious scenario- Germany's intention to dominate the Near East of which the Berlin-Baghdad railway was "a physical manifestation." As a result, the Monarchy must be destroyed and the subject nationalities freed from German and Magyar control. (35) This theme of Germany's 'Drang nach Osten'- a revival of her medieval ambitions- was not just limited to Eastern Europe but extended to the Persian Gulf and, therefore, threatened Britain's communications with India and, indeed, India itself. This threat to the 'Jewel in the Crown' of the British Empire was a subject that The Times repeatedly emphasized as the war progressed.

Throughout the autumn and winter of 1914/15 various monthly and quarterly journals such as *The Contemporary Review*, *Fortnightly Review*, *Nineteenth Century* and *English Review* started to look at the Monarchy more closely and examine its role in the European state system. The *Contemporary Review* published Robert Seton-Watson's sympathetic obituary of Franz Ferdinand, to which mention has already been made, in its August number, along with an important article by Theodor von Sossnosky, entitled 'The Balkan Policy of the Habsburg Empire.' Sossnosky shared Seton-Watson's views on the murdered Archduke,

whose reputed plans and ambitions would have revitalized the Empire, giving the Slavs and the Roumanians a share in its government. Sosnosky like Seton-Watson considered the Archduke's death both a personal and a political tragedy of the highest order and only the future "would show whether the assassination of Franz Ferdinand was a direction-post or the gravestone for the Monarchy." (36) Even before war actually broke out J. Ellis Barker, a contributor to the Fortnightly Review, had already concluded that unless the Monarchy were federally reconstructed then it would inevitable disintegrate, since it lacked any real internal cohesion. Any sustained shock such as war would be likely to bring the whole structure down just like a "House of Cards." (37) However, the chances of such a fundamental reorganisation being carried out were slim because the Empire's dominant races, the Germans and Magyars were implacably opposed to it. A few months after war had been declared, Ellis returned to a discussion of the Empire's problems but this time his article 'The Ultimate Disappearance of Austria-Hungary' for the Nineteenth Century contained a scathing attack on the Habsburgs and he openly declared for the Monarchy's destruction. Only the Empire's overthrow, he now argued, could give the subject nationalities "meaningful liberation"- mere federation would no longer be sufficient. (38) Ellis could not refrain from a certain grudging admiration for the Habsburgs, saying that they were "the most successful family of matrimonial and land speculators known to history" (39) but then, if only for this reason, it was only right that the Empire be broken up "in the name of the principle of nationality." (40) Another commentator, writing under the pseudonym 'Britannicus' launched a similar caustic attack on the Monarchy in the pages of the English Review:

"The polyglot and invertebrate chaos, held together for so long by fears that have now ceased to terrify, a mosaic of racial antipathies, destitute of anything resembling a sense of common patriotism, is the very negation of all that is understood by the principle of nationality." (41)

After all, 'Britannicus' went on, even the Emperor Franz Joseph himself had candidly admitted at the turn of the century that "we are an anomaly amongst the states of Europe" and

it was gainsaid that the application of "the principle of nationality" would lead to the Empire's destruction.(42) (The same also could be said of Britain's ally, Russia.) The Empire's supposed *raison d'être*: the defence of Christendom, whether Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox against the Muslim Ottoman Turks, was no longer a factor of any significance. This lack of any real external threat quite simply deprived the Monarchy of any rationale. It was clear then to 'Britannicus' that whatever emerged from the world-wide struggle now taking place Austria-Hungary, as a state, would not be one of them. The argument that Serbia did represent such an external threat was, 'Britannicus' argued, not a valid one since the peoples on both sides of the frontier were of the same Slavonic race, sharing similar cultural and religious views.

Not all commentators, however, viewed the subject nationalities of the Empire with such favour. Edith Sellars, for example, obviously knew very little about the Slav inhabitants of the Monarchy and cared even less. Edith was in fact convinced that Austria-Hungary had been effectively goaded into the war with Britain and France by Germany and most Austrians cordially detested their ally, much preferring the British and French. Without a shred of substantiation she could even blithely assert that the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was actually planning to attack Germany when he was murdered.(43)

A common accusation levelled against sympathizers with Monarchy by Henry Wickham Steed and supporters of the journal *New Europe* was that they invariably fell into three definite social categories: financiers, Catholics and Jews. More often than not these people encompassed a wider category of what was generally defined as 'society people.' While it was true that a large number of people in the City who believed that the war could only damage Britain, economically and financially, there was no widespread conspiracy against Britain's involvement, as Steed seemed to think. According to Margot Asquith, the wife of the Prime Minister, her husband regarded them as "the greatest ninnies" that he "ever had to tackle" and that he found them all in a state of funk, like old women chattering over tea-cups in a cathedral town."(44)

The bankers, Lord Rothschild and Mr. Leopold Rothschild did, in fact, argue that The Times seemed almost 'hell-bent' on hounding the British people into war- which was a fair enough comment- but, naturally, this merely confirmed Steed in his prejudices since both men were financiers and Jews and, therefore, ipso facto, doubly damned. When they tried to point out the potentially disastrous consequences of a war for the economy, Steed dismissed their caveats as a "typically, dirty Jewish financial trick"(45) and an attempt to put the paper's financial editor, Hugh Chisholm, under malign pressure.

It is quite conceivable, of course, that so-called 'good society' regarded Austrians and Hungarians as 'decent folk' just like themselves, if only because knowledge of the other peoples of the Empire was so slight, but that, in the last analysis, is not saying very much. That the Vatican, as the pivot of the universal Catholic Church- and indeed 'catholic' per se means 'universal'- saw the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as a microcosm of what the world should be, is almost certainly true, but there is no evidence that the Church in England was trying to influence the British government in the Empire's favour. The Habsburgs themselves, although firm supporters of the Catholic Church as the Counter-Reformation had demonstrated and their ancestral titles indicated, such as 'Apostolic King of Hungary', never brooked any direct influence of Rome in the Monarchy's temporal affairs. Therefore, it was even less likely, even if the Vatican had seriously wanted to, that the Catholic Church would try and influence a government, presiding over a Protestant and increasingly secular society. If there was hardly a 'Catholic conspiracy' there was even less of a Jewish one. Some Jews in both Europe and America were pro-German but many others were not. Whether the memory of Bismarck's so-called 'Hofjude', Bleichröder, whose financial expertise had helped fund his wars in 1866-71 to create the German Empire, coloured Weltanschauung and enhanced his suspicion of Jews, is quite possible; however, to suspect there existed some master plan on the lines of the infamous 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' to subvert Europe in the interests of Germany, was patently absurd.

Edith Durham was a particularly vitriolic critic of the Slav peoples inhabiting the Monarchy. Edith had travelled extensively throughout the Balkans and, although she had taken pains to learn the Serbian language, she had no love for the Serbs or any other Slavonic people for that matter. The root cause of all the trouble in the Balkans, as she saw it, was Russia and Russian intrigues amongst her co-racials. Her favourite people were the Albanians, and having seen how the Serbs had treated them during the Balkan Wars in 1912-13, she had become convinced that they merely exhibited the barbaric traits common to all the Slav peoples. News of the outbreak of war reached Edith in Brindisi in Southern Italy after crossing from Albania on August 6th 1914 and she was literally horrified that Britain was now at war on behalf of 'the Slav' in alliance with the formenter of all the trouble in the first place- Russia. "After that", she gloomily remarked, "I really did not care what happened. The cup of my humiliation was full." (46) Viewed objectively, the nationalism of the Balkans was "Europe's curse" and in the last analysis amounted to no more than an excuse for one small people to oppress another. The nationalism of the Slavs, as the years 1912-13 had vividly demonstrated, was brutal and bloody and only a federal Europe could put an end to this senseless, internecine warfare. Edith Durham summed up her feelings in a letter to the Manchester Guardian on June 20th 1917:

"In the interests of permanent peace what we want to see is more federation- the federation in fact, of all Europe; not the institution of a number of little cocks, each crowing on its own dunghill and teaching its chicks to thank God they were hatched, let us say, blue Slovaks or pink Magyars, and to build tariff walls against foreign egg powder and patent food." (47)

Given this perspective it is scarcely surprising that Edith Durham should look askance at any attempts to disrupt the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which whatever its faults and defects, was, nevertheless, a federation in embryo that might one day be fully realised.

Intrepid adventureress that she was, her attempts to project herself as an authority on all aspects of Balkan affairs was, in reality, ill-founded and only an abysmal lack

of knowledge on the part of the majority of the British population enabled her to gain credence for her views. In this Edith Durham was by no means alone. Her friend, E.V. Arnold, Professor of Latin at Bangor University, had even less real knowledge of the Balkans and Central Europe than she had, but this did not stop him from making the wildest of statements on the basis of a solitary visit to Bohemia. According to Arnold the Germans were very much the 'underdogs' in this Austrian province even though they formed nearly one half of the population. To him the very idea that the Slav population was in any way oppressed was risible and, as far as he was concerned, the faux pas par excellence that the Germans made in Bohemia, was "teaching the Slavs the alphabet not of the Germans but of Italy, France and England"(48), although whether he meant by this the Gothic Script is anybody's guess.

One of the main centres of opposition to the war and the disruption of the Monarchy was the Union of Democratic Control, organized by E.D. Morel, Norman Angell, Ramsey MacDonald (later first Labour Prime Minister) and Arthur Ponsonby. For the UDC the war was the inevitable result of secret diplomacy and the lack of any effective, popular control over foreign policy, the preserve of Cabinet élites. The spiritus movens of the organization was undoubtedly Morel whose hostility to Slavdom in general and Russia in particular was well-known. If the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed, he argued, this would be nothing short of a catastrophe since the Slavonic states that would be likely to replace it would be no more than Russian satellites, bringing into the heart of Central Europe all the lamentable defects of the Tsarist régime. Such a prospect filled him with absolute dread as he confided in a letter to the Chairman of the Birkenhead Liberal Association on August 4th 1914:

"How can any sane Englishman contemplate with anything but horror the shattering of German civilization, so akin to our own, towards which the world stands so immeasurably indebted, and the overrunning of the plains of Europe by the vast hordes of a semi-asiatic Power, uncomprehending, irresponsible, driven in blind unreasoning acquiescence at the behest of a military autocracy whose ambitions are as limitless as its hatred of democracy is inveterate."(49)

Whether the claims of the subject nationalities of the Habsburg Empire were just or not did not weigh too heavy with the UDC. However, even if their cause were just, the UDC was still of the opinion that no money let alone the lives of British soldiers should be expended on their behalf:

"It does not follow, even if a majority of the people in Bohemia, Finland, Ireland, Slavonia, Transylvania, Bessarabia, or the Ukraine, desire a separate State, that the war should continue till they can have exactly what they want." (50)

The prime concern of the UDC was to put an end to an increasingly bloody war as soon as possible and everything else paled into insignificance in comparison. As far as questions of national self-determination were concerned these could best and safely left to a Peace Conference where not only governments but also elected representatives of the various peoples' political parties could have their say, which would, Norman Angell argued, give "publicity to their case and be a powerful aid in their fight for autonomy." (51)

In spite of the criticism and suspicion levelled at the Slav peoples it could not be denied that their cause was becoming increasingly popular- fashionable even- in London and Paris alike. People were thrilled at the stunning victories that were being won by the Serbian and Russian armies. Much to the surprise of seasoned military observers the Serbs succeeded twice in throwing back numerically superior Austro-Hungarian forces across the Danube, while Russia had conquered a large part of Galicia. Nothing breeds enthusiasm more readily than success. Significantly too, the Tsar seemed to be making more and more liberal noises, promising autonomy to Poland, including those areas under German and Austrian control. As a result the winter of 1914/15 became notable for the first time to favourable references to the Czech, South Slav and Roumanian inhabitants of the Habsburg Monarchy. Particularly noteworthy in this respect was a series of articles in The Times, penned under the anonymous title of 'A Neutral Observer.' According to this commentator, reporting from the Czech capital, Prague was so pro-Allied that he could scarcely believe that he was at the heart of the Central Powers. The cause of the two Germanic Powers was openly castigated and woe betide the person who dared to speak German in the streets. Russia's

eastern victories were received with unparalleled displays of enthusiasm as common Slav successes against the common German and Magyar enemy. However, perhaps aware, that this reporting carried more than a hint of wishful thinking rather than an objective assessment of existing reality, especially for a self-professed 'Neutral Observer', this commentator felt obliged to offer an important caveat: while there was hostility to Germany and enthusiasm for Russia, there was little bad feeling vis-à-vis the Habsburgs.

"I found no international view in Prague, I mean thereby no programme for the establishment of a Bohemian Kingdom or even Republic. That may not mean that no such programme exists. When it is remembered that a united State, including Bohemia, Moravia, and the adjacent Slovak provinces would form a country far richer, more fertile, and populous than any of the existing Balkan States, or even of the smaller states of Europe, this lack of international 'vision' is possibly more apparent than real." (52)

What struck the so-called 'Neutral Observer' most was the prevalent belief that Austria was no longer regarded as the equal ally of Germany but rather her satellite and to all intents and purposes the border between them had disappeared.

Over the next few months The Times devoted considerable space to the alleged political situation in Prague and Bohemia, and some of the reports were as lurid as they were fanciful. On August 20th the paper highlighted a claim from an undefined Russian source that a revolution had broken out in the capital and that "the River Moldau ran red with Czech blood" while Thomas Masaryk and other Czech patriots had been "executed in the citadel." (53) In an effort to raise morale no doubt on the home front, the paper made great play of increasing desertions from the Czech and other Slav regiments to the Russians on the Galician front, saying that as early as October 1914 Czech soldiers were actually fighting against other Austro-Hungarian units. (54) That disaffection existed, seems evident, but its prevalence was almost certainly exaggerated, as is usually the case in war-time- truth being the first casualty. Czech and Yugoslav émigrés in Britain found themselves in somewhat of a quandry: If Habsburg rule were as oppressive as

they claimed then why was not disaffection more widespread? To explain this dichotomy The Times proffered a somewhat ingenuous if not convincing argument. Although Austria was traditionally known for its Schlämperei (muddling through) or 'despotism moderated by inefficiency', the machinery of repression was now nulli secundus. Consequently the Habsburg government had taken steps to arrest and detain all the leaders of the people, actual or potential and to institute a régime of strict control and surveillance. The Times was only too eager to endorse Thomas Masaryk's claim that "if they (the Czechs) have not the heart to rebel, they have not the stomach to fight." Evidently, the Czech people were in some sort of political limbo. However, in an attempt to end on an optimistic note The Times repeated Masaryk's assertion that if the people could be convinced that challenging Austrian rule was not a forlorn endeavour then "they would gladly obey the call of their blood." (55) The Times also advanced the argument that the outbreak of war was really quite unexpected and, therefore, the small Slav nations were caught unprepared. However, this argument was somewhat facetious since the expectancy of a general European war had been around sometime, as Pasić, the Serbian Premier had indicated.

Almost certainly the multi-national character of the Habsburg Empire impressed itself for the first time in a big way on the British public through the problem of what to do with those Czechs, Poles, Italians, Yugoslavs and Roumanians who found themselves trapped in Britain as a result of the outbreak of war. Technically, of course, they were 'enemy aliens', irrespective of whether they were pro-Habsburg or not. A decision was made to intern them but since a fair number of them might very well be sympathetic to the Allied cause, Lord Charles Beresford asked the Government in the Commons whether, if they had to be interned, they could be kept separate from the Germans and Austrians. Knowing that there was not much love lost between these groups, to intern them all without discrimination would be a recipe for disaster. The Under-Secretary for War said the point was well made and promised to see what could be done (57) The Russian Colonel, Roustan Bek, made an

even more dramatic suggestion in an article in the Daily Express, asking whether it would not be possible to give all those that wanted it British nationality "hence delivering them for ever from the detestable name of Austrian." (58) If this were not feasible then perhaps they might be made "subjects of the Tsar." (59) A more practical solution was arrived at by the London Czech Committee, founded at the beginning of the war by František Kopecký and Jan Sykora. They asked the British Home Office to recognize any identity cards issued by the Committee as bona fide proof that the bearers were on the Allies' side. In this they had the influential support of the historian, Sir Lewis Namier (later of Vanished Supremacies fame) who argued cogently that no one could help the accident of their birth. Past circumstances may have made many people of many nationalities Habsburg subjects, even malgré eux, but "men born in a stable are not for that horses." (60) Whether this was an apt metaphor is, of course, open to question. Undoubtedly by 1914 'Nationality' was a kind of cause célèbre in Britain and, therefore, distinguishing between the different peoples that composed the Monarchy was of great political significance. Naturally the belief that at the heart of the enemy powers there was a substantial number of people sympathetic to the Allied cause was a good morale-booster. Curiously enough, though, while 'nationality' per se was seen largely as intrinsically positive, Britain had never produced a philosopher of nationalism on par with that of Germany and Italy. However, upon reflection, this is not too surprising since Britain's existence as an independent power had not been seriously challenged since the days of Napoleonic France at the beginning of the 19th century. If anything, however, one might have expected people to be a little more circumspect since as Queen Victoria perspicaciously foresaw as early as 1837:

"In sympathizing with the demands of Italian and German nationalists, do we not run the danger of storing up trouble for ourselves? For what if some day the people of Canada, Malta, India and Ireland should come forth with similar demands? (61)

No doubt the fate of her beloved husband Albert's principality of Saxa-Coburg-Gotha was a factor in her thinking,

were a united Germany ever to come about.

As far as Britain was concerned the natural concomitant of nationality and nationalism in general was liberalism, and thus, even Lord Acton, who was otherwise guarded about nationalist programmes, could say that "the denial of nationality implies the denial of political liberty." (62) (Or, at least, that is what it had become.) The French writer, Jules Destrée, was to stress the connection between nationality and modern constitutional ideas in his article 'Belgium and the Principle of Nationality' as follows:

"The principle of nationality is a modern idea which could exercise its full force only in a society which recognized freedom as one of the most precious human possessions. It provides a foundation in reason and justice for the formation of states." (63)

Somewhat curiously, though, Destrée failed to point out that Belgium consisted of two principal nationalities- Flemings and Walloons, whose relations had, as they are still today, been problematic.

The intellectual fons et origo of this Weltanschauung stem back to the writings of the Liberal political philosopher, John Stuart Mill, who gave the classic English definition of nationality in his 'Considerations on Representative Government':

"Where the sentiment of nationality exists in any force, there is a prima facie case for uniting all the members of the nationality under the same government, and a government to themselves apart. This is merely saying that the question of government ought to be decided by the governed. One hardly knows what any division of the human race should be free to do if not to determine with which of the collective bodies of human beings they should choose to associate themselves." (64)

Yet this idea of 'nationality' was somewhat circumscribed in that its application was limited to what even Marx and Engels (at least, at first) had referred to earlier in 1848/9 as 'World-Historical Nations' such as the Germans, Magyars and Italians. (Only one Slavonic people-the Poles- had been so honoured.) The Greeks of antiquity fame were also mentioned *honoris causa*, as Lord Byron's eulogy about them during the War of Independence against the Turks in the 1820's vividly illustrated. Somewhat begrudgingly, one might say, British

commentators came to the view that the peoples of the Balkans were entitled to a state of their own but the Leitmotif of their thinking was rather a general sympathy for fellow Christians living under 'alien' muslim rule than an acceptance or acknowledgement of the validity of Serbian or Bulgarian nationalism per se. According to Alfred Zimmern "not every nation could be a State." Thirty years ago this might have been possible but now "people had to reappraise their ideas of nationalism" in the light of the changed circumstances of the modern world, i.e. the development of international organizations and increased social mobility of people from one country to another. (65) "The emergence of national sentiment in all sorts of unexpected places"- and here Zimmern almost certainly had the Balkans and Central Europe in mind- led him to lay "greater stress on its intimate and cultural aspects" rather than just the political. (66)

In contrast to Western Europe nationalism in the East of Europe had not been fostered by generals like Napoleon or statesmen like Cavour in Italy and Bismarck in Germany but by historians, philologists and poets, such as Petöfi in Hungary- what the Russians had succinctly termed as the 'intelligentsia.' In the case of the West, too, the formation of nation-states had often been preceded by a period of profound economic and social changes epitomized by the creation of the Zollverein, for example, in Germany and the development of a bourgeois middle-class. Consequently when Liberal observers looked at Austria- which was not often- they saw a state which they assumed would become a nation-state. Quite clearly and indeed, understandably, from their perspective, they were thinking in terms of the British state which had evolved over the centuries through an amalgam of English, Scots, Welsh. Irish etc., without any of the individual nationalities losing their own particular characteristics, When Liberals identified a pronounced national consciousness amongst the peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy they tended to equate it with the justifiable demands of Irish Nationalists for some degree of Home Rule.

Liberals had a touching faith in freedom and democracy

which they thought could only prosper in a nation state. When Conservative observers like Lord Acton pointed to countries like Germany the usual riposte was 'this was the exception that proves the rule.' The arguments that were used as far as Germany was concerned were quite ingenuous. Germany, Liberals argued, had come to national unity late in the day and as a consequence the Germans had come to hold the state in awe, to almost deify it as 'Der Ausgang Gottes in der Welt' (The March of God in the World), as Hegel once termed it- although one must say in all fairness that Hegel was far from being a German Nationalist and would have almost certainly looked askance at the prussianized German Reich. The Germans' greatest mistake was their failure to subject the instrument of unification- the Prussian state- to democratic control and to be held in thrall by the aristocratic and bureaucratic apparatus of the Machtstaat that had created it. In this respect it is instructive to note that the National Liberal Party in Germany became progressively more 'national' than 'liberal', almost fawning on Bismarck, the architect of German unity. The traditional Liberal desiderata of freedom and democracy were placed on the 'back-burner', so to speak, and the 'Rechtstaat' that Hegel actually wanted, seemed as remote as ever. A.J. Toynbee was to put it, graphically, thus: "The Germans worshipped the scythe instead of garnering the ears." (67)

The assumption that their ideology and nationalism moved *pari passu* was axiomatic for most Liberals, as the following article in the Round Table of December 1914, entitled 'Nationalism and Liberty' cogently illustrated:

"Liberalism is common to all Western culture, international in its tendency and universal in its appeal, while nationalism is the distinctive soil in which those differing cultures have grown and flowered." (68)

Charles Buxton, who was well-known as a commentator on Balkan affairs, also linked "the principle of nationality" with democratic forms of government, as well as religious freedom and universal free education. (69) Others like A.E. Zimmern, following in the wake of John Stuart Mill, argued that the achievement of peoples' national unity would finally put paid to war since it was the frustration of this aim that was mainly responsible for all the conflicts in Europe over the

last hundred years. The liberation of 'oppressed' subject nationalities from foreign rule would, ipso facto, ensure that Europe's future development would be a peaceful and progressive one. The Church of England's weekly, *Challenge*, also gave expression to this Weltanschauung as follows:

"The way to make nations think more of their positive contributions to life in the world is to give them freedom. Free nations are not unduly absorbed in nationality, just as a man whose boots fit him is not unduly absorbed in his boots." (70)

It seems then that this view that the ultimate fulfillment of the nationalist agenda would remove one of the most fundamental causes of war- if not the most important- was widespread. The Church of England took up the national issue with such enthusiasm that the London Secretary of the Christian Social Union, Percy Dearmer, went on to suggest that every home in the country should have a racial and ethnic map of Europe on the wall just to illustrate "how wickedly and fantastically the frontiers wriggle through the real nationalities of Europe." (71)

C. Delisle Burns summed up the whole question in the following way:

"It is now regarded as desirable in England that there should be a closer correspondence than there is between the distinctions of nationality and the distinctions of political institutions." (72)

C.E. Fayle, too, argued in his book *The Great Settlement* and in the pages of the journal *War and Peace* that all the while artificial states like Austria-Hungary continued to exist with large disaffected nationalities, the threat of war could never be removed from Europe. Since such states could only maintain their control over the peoples by force they had no option but to create large standing armies which were naturally viewed as permanent menaces by the countries surrounding them. Such states could not help but 'trigger off' what in modern parlance is known as an 'arms race.' Thus, it followed, Fayle argued, the satisfaction of legitimate national aspirations would diminish national antagonisms, strengthen the cause of peace and remove the need for large standing armies. Winston Churchill expressed similar sentiments in an interview with an American journalist in September 1914:

"If we succeed, and if, as the result of our victory, Europe is rearranged, as far as possible with regard to principles of nationality and in accordance with the wishes of the peoples who dwell in the various disputed areas, we may look forward with hope to a great relaxation and easement." (73)

Zimmern was not, however, oblivious to the negative aspects of nationalism, pointing out in his work *Nationality and Government* that it would be no easy matter for peoples formerly subjected to oppressive, alien rule to learn how to rule fairly themselves, since "the lack of liberty was a very bad training for the use of liberty." (74) Sean O'Casey, the Irish playwright, later reflected on this point when asked in 1921 whether Ireland would now be better governed with the British driven out. "Not at all", he replied, "Before we were badly governed by Englishmen, now we shall be badly governed by Irishmen- that is all." (75)

Other writers like J.H. Rose argued in his article 'The National Idea' for *The Contemporary Review* that one of the greatest dangers of nationalism was that it could so easily become imperialistic. It could become a question of 'Primus inter Pares'- or to paraphrase George Orwell: "All nations are equal but some are more equal than others." Nationality was truly a double-edged weapon. Peoples that failed to develop a sense of national identity were fated to pass out of history altogether but a nationality that became too assertive like the German could only become a menace to its neighbours. National problems, in Rose's view, were far removed from that of social problems. The latter were amenable to rational discussion and therefore susceptible to ultimate solution, but national and racial questions belonged to the domain of emotion and were, therefore, essentially irrational. They pertained "to the savage side of human nature" but there was no denying that until they had received "due satisfaction, mankind was always apt to reel back into the beast." (76) With a remarkable degree of optimism, which was unfortunately not borne out by later events (Fascism and Nazism), Robert Seton-Watson, inter alios, argued in the pamphlet *The War and Democracy* that, "the principle of nationality was not a talisman which would open all gates but it was the best salve for existing wounds." (77) L.T. Hobhouse too, in his book *The World in Conflict*

declared that notwithstanding the inherent dangers of nationalism it was the current *Zeitgeist* and could not be ignored. Whether one approved or not the process associated with it had to be endured. (78) In his *Essays and Addresses* Lord James Bryce argued that nationalism per se was not the danger- rather it was nationalism allied to other factors such as the quasi-deification of a powerful state apparatus such as had occurred in Germany. Or as he put it by an analogy taken from chemistry: "Just as two chemical substances which may be comparatively harmless apart make up a dangerous explosive when combined." Somewhat less than convincingly, one might say, Bryce then drew an analogy from physics, saying: "The same electricity which is a destroying force in the thunderbolt carries our messages and warms our houses when diverted to safe uses." (79) Thus, one can say, that while British observers were not blind to the dangers of nationalism, they were inclined to give it the benefit of the doubt. In so doing, however, they were consciously sacrificing the future to the immediate demands of the present- principally, of course, to win the war against Austria-Hungary and Germany.

Somewhat paradoxically, it seems, the protagonists of nationalism were arguing that the creation of even more separate national states was the *sine qua non* of a fairer and more viable international order that would mitigate the worst excesses of that very same nationalism. Their argument rested somewhat uneasily on turning inevitability into a virtue: since national feeling was so important in modern political life, it could not be foresworn. Governments and statesmen had, *nolens volens*, 'to run with it', so to speak. Whatever the possible drawbacks it had to be viewed as an essential step on the road to the international union of humanity. The cause of humanity at large was an admirable one but those who failed to acknowledge "the reality of national feeling" were like those people who "bid a man climb a ladder while simultaneously taking away the rungs." (80) Rose was too astute to assume that the process of moving from 'the lower to the higher rungs' was an automatic development, so he could only hope that:

"After the attainment of national independence the national instinct which strengthens with opposition

and weakens with the satisfaction, ought to merge in the wider and nobler sentiment of human brotherhood in the attainment of which it is only a preparatory phase." (81)

Viewed from this aspect the national state was thus some kind of 'political purgatory'- a half-way house between the hell of oppressive, foreign rule and the heaven of universal brotherhood.

Such optimism was not shared by everyone and particularly not by the Conservative Lord Acton, who, although he was to moderate his views with the passage of time, nevertheless, issued a searing indictment of nationalism in his essay 'Nationality' in 1862. Acton's essay was a direct riposte to J.S. Mill, who had praised the concept of nationality with great enthusiasm in his essay on representative government the year before in 1861. Writing shortly after the unification of Italy in 1860-61 and before the unification of Germany ten years later (1870-71), Acton argued that "the theory of nationalism is more absurd and more criminal than the theory of socialism." (82) Since for Acton liberty was the political desideratum par excellence, nationalism, with its exclusive preoccupation with sentiment and feeling in the creation of states at the expense of all other considerations, was the gravest danger to individual liberty. With considerable foresight he once remarked to George Trevelyan, whose enthusiasm for Garibaldi and Italian unity was well-known, that both a united national state in Italy and Germany could very well represent the most serious threat to liberty that Europe had known for centuries. (83)

Nationality was a comparatively recent phenomenon, having first come to the fore during the course of the French Revolution at the end of the 18th century when dynastic loyalty had been jettisoned and a new basis for the state's *raison d'être* was urgently required. Acton admitted that nationality had been a factor in the English Puritan Revolution a century earlier but only as one consideration *inter alia* and it certainly did not assume the overwhelming importance that it did in France from 1789 onwards. For Acton the existence of several nationalities within the confines of the same state was a *sine qua non* for

the defence and preservation of liberty since freedom required variety and diversity. Thus he declared: "The combination of different nations in one State is as necessary a condition of civilized life as the combination of men in society." (84)

French revolutionaries and German Nationalists alike, in Acton's view, had failed to appreciate the crucial difference between state and government. The state was not an end in itself, whatever Plato or Hegel may have thought, but a pragmatic tool, its chief function being to provide the institutional framework within which different peoples and races could co-exist to their mutual benefit. The state should not by any means be determined by the sole criterion of nationality.

"It is in the cauldron of the State that the fusion takes place by which the vigour, the knowledge, and the capacity of one portion of mankind may be communicated to another. Where political and national boundaries coincide, society ceases to advance, and nations relapse into a condition corresponding to that of men who renounce intercourse with their fellow-men." (85)

Far from being a progressive idea, as Liberal thinkers and statesmen like Mill and Gladstone fondly imagined, "the theory of nationality" was, in Acton's view, "a retrograde step in history" since one particular nationality was made 'the bearer of the State Idea' to which all the other nationalities were ultimately subordinate. This was unavoidable: were it otherwise than the state would lose its rationale as a particular national state. (86)

Yet, despite its 'absurdity' Acton was prepared to admit that nationality had a certain degree of rationality in that it marked "the final conflict, and therefore the end of two forces which are the worst enemies of freedom- the absolute monarchy and the revolution." (87)

Later Acton came to believe that perhaps a series of federal democracies based upon the nation might, legitimately, replace the multi-national state. In the last analysis even the great critic of nationalism had to concede the potency of the 'National Idea' which could not be indefinitely denied. That being said, Acton, nevertheless, regarded the multi-national state of the Habsburg Monarchy with great sympathy, and there is little doubt that his views influenced men as

diverse as Brailsford, Lowes Dickinson, Morel, Hobson, and Zimmern inter alios.

In Lowes Dickinson's opinion the development of the sovereign nation state from the 15th century onwards was a far from genial process: it involved nothing less than the subversion of the traditional world order and its replacement by what he termed "The International Anarchy"- the title of his magnum opus. 'National honour' now became a convenient cloak to mask the naked greed and vulgar material interests of those who controlled the destinies of the modern national states. Lowes-Dickinson would have fully seconded Acton's well-known aphorism that "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." (88)

For Norman Angell, nationalism was a curse since it fostered the basest instincts to be found in humanity in pursuit of less than noble aims. Nationalists demand the creation of nation states which by the very act (ipso facto) could only serve the interests of the so-called 'leading nation' to the ultimate detriment of all the other nationalities not so designated. In the modern world, Angell argued, it was physically impossible to separate peoples out in such a way that each particular nationality could have its own state without injuring the interests of any other nationality. Moreover since the majority of nationalists were convinced of the moral superiority of their own 'particular national idea' they were notoriously reluctant to concede equal validity to the claims of other nationalities. Thus, once again it became a question of some nations being more equal than others. The other great danger of nationalism was that nationality was depicted as "an absolute and unqualified good" but if this were the case, Angell argued, human society would become virtually impossible. To make nationality the supreme end of the state was to in effect make the state absolute, precluding any chance of creating a truly free, civil society. (89)

When J.A. Hobson came to discuss the rights of smaller nations to secede from larger political units like Austria-Hungary, he was willing to accept the principle but added some important caveats. A people's right to self-determination should not involve the frustration of other peoples' legitimate rights

which, in any case, must be subordinate to wider political considerations. Hobson could not stress too highly that "the liberty of one people must not interfere with the effective liberty of other peoples." (90)

In general, however, radicals tended to view nationalist movements with grave suspicion, regarding them as distracting peoples' attention from far more important issues such as economic and social reform. As far as Lowes Dickinson was concerned, to further the cause of nationality was to further the cause of international anarchy and a veritable 'bellum omnium contra omnes.' Socialists like Brailsford were willing to accept the principle of cultural autonomy but not the right to complete political separation. The attitude of socialists towards nationalists- such as Irish nationalists, for example- should be as follows:

"By all means, since you insist on it, you shall exercise this right without reservation. Decide by constituent assembly or by plebiscite, in full liberty, what it is you prefer, republican independence or dominion home rule. If you choose independence, we shall make no difficulties." But having said this, he (the socialist) may go on to state, as forcibly as he can, the arguments against absolute nationalism- the economic risks, the cultural losses, the danger of militarism, the illusory nature of political independence for any small people in this dangerous world. He may urge that, in spite of gross errors in the past and a disastrous historic legacy, two peoples who decide to live together with some common ties may, while conceding to each other self-government in many things, lead a richer and fuller life, because in other things they co-operate." (91)

The journal War and Peace was indeed to stress the fact that "the more beneficial movement of civilization is not towards disruption but towards larger and larger political aggregates", which would not, however, preclude "every kind of cultural autonomy." (92)

Given this Weltanschauung it is hardly surprising that Brailsford should oppose any attempts to disrupt the Habsburg Monarchy, saying:

"The subject nationalities of Austria-Hungary are primitive, unschooled races, not indeed without their own charm and emotional genius, who never, even after generations of experience are likely to replace the Germans as industrial and intellectual workers." (93)

His socialism notwithstanding, Brailsford, nevertheless, believed that large empires did have 'a cultural mission' to perform as far as peoples 'on a lower rung of civilization' were concerned- such as the Serbs and Slovaks. Brailsford's socialism did exclude a fair measure of paternalism, which was, of course, scarcely unusual at the time. Even a cursory glance at the Kingdom of Serbia, he argued, would prove that the Serbs of the Monarchy enjoyed higher living standards and a much richer cultural life . "No impartial observer", he concluded, "can fail to appreciate the benefits the latter enjoy which are far superior to those south of the Save." (94)

Like many Socialists Brailsford seriously doubted that any states carved out of the body-politic of Austria-Hungary could be economically viable. The Danubian basin was, after all, a natural economic and social whole which gave the Monarchy its political *raison d'être*. (95) This economic unity was of supreme importance to Brailsford (in contrast to Seton-Watson, one might add) since it enabled many small, disparate peoples to engage in mutually beneficial economic and commercial activity, utilizing the numerous rivers that crossed the area- the Drave, Save, Theiss, as well as the Danube itself. Another fact of great importance was that although the Danubian basin occupied a vast geographical area, access to the nearest sea- the Adriatic- was limited to two major ports- Trieste and Fiume- and it was solely the political unity of the Monarchy which enabled all three principal races- German, Magyar and Slav- to use them equally. If the fons et origo of the Monarchy had been military conquest and dynastic inheritance, it was "economic necessity" that had wielded the Empire together. In comparison national independence for the peoples that composed it was a "spiritual luxury" which it (and they) could well do without. (95a)

Since economic factors, particularly the importance of international maritime trade, made political independence of land-locked states like Bohemia purely illusory in any case, Brailsford had little or no sympathy for intellectuals like Thomas Masaryk. Bohemia by its very geographical position would be forced to rely on the support of either France or

Russia in order to defend itself against its German and Magyar enemies that surrounded its territory. Then again the distribution of the population was such that the new state would be bound to include a large German minority- especially in the borderlands (i.e. Sudetenland)- whose loyalty to the Czech national state would be (understandably) highly problematic. Any future Czech government would be forced to adopt more and more militaristic measures in order to control this disaffected minority which would mitigate against any future democratic development. Similarly, if Slovakia were torn away from Hungary, an equally disastrous scenario was likely to prevail there. In any case, Brailsford argued "a so-called Czecho-slovak state" was likely to be still-born- regardless of what Seton-Watson *inter alios* might think. (96)

Brailsford accepted the fact that the Monarchy had serious "nationality problems"- indeed that they were its 'Achilles heel'- but the answer was not, in his view, dissolution but rather federal reconstruction. Some form of 'Home Rule' would, he felt, satisfy the majority of the Empire's peoples and in that way the natural economic unity of the Danubian basin could be preserved. Ideally, he ventured, the government in Vienna would safeguard the interests of the German minority in Bohemia while the government in Budapest could do the same for the Magyars in Transsylvania. The details of a satisfactory *modus vivendi* could be safely left to the politicians and statesmen directly involved. A federal reorganisation of the empire would be infinitely better than any so-called 'independent' Czech state or a Transsylvania annexed to a backward Balkan state like Roumania. In the last analysis the dismemberment of the Habsburg Monarchy would merely lead to a reversal of roles in which 'the oppressed' of today would become 'the oppressors' of tomorrow and vice versa. (97)

Writing in the *London Nation* of August 29th 1914, Brailsford argued that any talk of dismembering the Habsburg Empire was only to play into the hands of those German militarists that maintained it was just these rapacious designs that made it essential for both Austria-Hungary and Germany to keep large, standing armies in the first place. Since it proved impossible

to stop the war from beginning, Brailsford could only hope that it could be brought to an end as soon as possible. The South Slavs could then be accommodated through the creation of a third state-inter alia- on par with that of Austria and Hungary in a reconstituted Monarchy. All things considered, Brailsford concluded, "while the Monarchy inspires no love, it arouses only local hates" and therefore "will survive as a convenience." (98)

The general willingness of socialists to subordinate nationality questions to economic considerations can be clearly seen from the journal of the Union for Democratic Control. Thus Woodley Thompson argued in his article 'Nationality Problems: The Germans in Bohemia' that were the Monarchy to collapse then the largely German owned and German staffed industries of the Pilsen/Plzen area should be incorporated into Germany proper. Although there was no question that the German population was outnumbered 7 to 1 by the Czechs, nevertheless, demographic considerations would have to be subordinate to economic ones. After all he went on:

"They (the Germans) established and conduct all the great industrial enterprises which have raised the town to its present height of prosperity. It would be a wanton piece of wasteful wickedness to give such a place to unintelligent, unsympathetic, and possibly hostile control, merely because it is surrounded by Slav Bohemian peasants." (99)

Like Brailsford, Norman Angell looked askance at any project which entailed the destruction of the Monarchy. The reality of East-Central Europe was such that a veritable patchwork quilt of nationalities existed cheek by jowl and it was just physically impossible to separate them into distinct territorial units. "If every Britain has its Ireland", Angell argued, "then every Ireland has its Ulster." (100) The creation of new states out of a dismembered Monarchy would not resolve or assuage any national antagonisms but merely exacerbate them since aggrieved minorities would continue to exist in the new political entities so created. Again like Brailsford, Angell pointed to the importance of economics. The realities of the modern world were such that greater economic co-operation was

required at the international level not the disruption of that which already existed..(101)

For left-wing radicals and socialists alike "the touching concern for alleged oppressed nationalities" was essentially a subterfuge to mask the expansionist ambitions of the ruling classes of the various Entente Powers as well as the financial interests of Paris, London and New York.(102)

As the war dragged on the principle of nationality and the right to national self-determination gradually became elevated to the rank of official war aims. In the Guildhall on September 4th 1914 both the Liberal Prime Minister Asquith and the Conservative leader Bonar Law declared that it was Britain's duty to defend the smaller peoples of Europe from the aggressive designs of German imperialism, as the fate of Belgium and, by extension, Serbia bore witness. In a remarkable speech in Dublin, the same month, Asquith called upon Irishmen to fight for the cause of national freedom by enlisting in the British army. One may imagine that no irony, conscious or otherwise was intended, but it must have seemed so to many Irishmen and Irish women, themselves struggling for national liberation from Britain. 'Never mind poor Catholic Belgium- what about poor Catholic Ireland' was a common refrain in the streets of Dublin at this time.(103)

The final definitive word on self-determination at this time, however, was to be made by Asquith in another Guildhall speech on November 9th when he formally committed Britain to fighting "until the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe were placed on an unassailable foundation."(104) In fact this was to be the only official war aim to be announced as such until 1917. (Naturally, this was to be dramatically at variance with the secret treaties later concluded with Italy and Roumania- particularly Italy where the transfer of indisputably Slav territory in Istria and Dalmatia was agreed in April 1915.)

On October 4th 1916, Arthur Balfour, then First Lord of The Admiralty, was to echo Asquith's public pledge, saying that peace should be concluded only "in tune with the principle of nationality."(105) Two months before, Asquith, whose

knowledge of foreign affairs he readily admitted was "lamentable", had in fact instructed Sir William Tyrell to draw up a secret memorandum on the territorial desiderata of a peace treaty, taking the principle of self-determination as its Leitmotiv. The basic provisions of this memorandum were as follows: First of all there should be a reconstituted Poland including as much of Austrian and Prussian Poland as possible and linked to Russia through the person of the Tsar. The second point dealt with Bohemia--and here a variety of different solutions were proffered--including an independent state or a federal union with either Poland or a projected Yugoslav state. Tyrell's personal preference was for a federation between Bohemia and Poland "in conformity with the wishes of far-seeing Czechs and Poles" although who exactly these were remained shrouded in mystery. (The Slovaks, it seemed, had been completely forgotten.) Thirdly, Roumania should be granted the Roumanian inhabited districts of Transsylvania and the Bukowina-- which, incidentally, was somewhat less than had actually been promised to the Roumanian Prime Minister Bratianu the same month. Fourthly, the territorial promises to Italy with regard to Istria and Dalmatia should stand even though this was in flagrant contradiction with the fifth proviso: that all the other South Slav inhabited territories should form a strong federation--i.e. the Croats and Slovenes of the Monarchy should be united with the Serbs of Serbia and Montenegro. However, there was a further anomaly here. There was no mention, in any meaningful way, of the Serbs of Southern Hungary, whose fate was left vague and indeterminate. Sir William made no attempt to be even-handed as far as the principle of self-determination was concerned, but he was willing to make certain concessions to Imperial Germany. Even though the principle aim of the memorandum was to devise an effective barrier to German penetration of the East and South-East, under provision six, German speaking Austria would be allowed to join the Reich in compensation for Germany's loss of Polish speaking areas in the East and Alsace-Lorraine in the West. The addition of millions of German Catholics to the essentially Prussian and Protestant dominated Reich would have, it was felt, have

the additional advantage of diluting the militaristic spirit associated with Prussia which was the fons et origo of Germany's present 'wickedness' in the world. Finally, as far as Hungary was concerned, this state should have a completely independent existence with a guaranteed access to the sea at Fiume; a port, in any case, long associated with the Kingdom of Hungary. It was evident that this memorandum entailed nothing less than the destruction of the Habsburg Monarchy for, as Tyrell concluded "the survival of Austria-Hungary could not be reconciled with the objects for which the Allies went to war." (106) However, an important caveat is in order here. The memorandum was circulated by the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, without comment and the other members of the Cabinet did not in fact examine its provisions in detail until late 1917. Tyrell's colleagues in the Foreign Office were to produce at least one other memorandum on the Monarchy, which, while recommending certain cessions of territory to Serbia, Italy and Roumania, would, nevertheless leave a somewhat truncated Empire in existence. (107)

The growing 'love-affair' with the smaller peoples of Europe was far from being a disinterested and purely altruistic enterprise but was part of what would now be called an exercise in public relations, with a highly propagandistic input. In order to rally support for the war-effort, Germany was depicted as being not only morally bankrupt, but essentially 'evil' to boot. The Germans were, Lloyd George claimed, "bullies trampling on the small man" and "the British soldier, good soldier that he is, was coming to his aid." (108) As a Welshman and thus a member of a small nation himself, Lloyd George like the Scotsman Seton-watson, could 'wax quite lyrical' and his homilies on the virtues of small nationalities were remarkably convincing. In an article in The Times on September 1914, Lloyd George had the following to say:

"We are fighting to protect the weak against the strong, the ruthless strong, the cruel strong, the unscrupulous strong, the inhuman strong, the men who abuse the strength the Almighty endowed them with. The most contemptible of men are those men to whom God has given strength and muscle and who use it to oppress, torture, to trample on

and to crush those whom Providence has been less kind to. We are fighting for the protection of the weak against the bullying strong." (109)

James Bryce spoke in similar terms at this time, declaring further that "true greatness, whether in men or states" lay not in physical strength but "in the greatness of the soul." (110) Both The Times and the Morning Post were at one in claiming that the war was indeed, principally, about defending the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe from the overriding arrogance of their more powerful neighbours. On July 27th the Morning Post went so far as to say that the assassination of the Austrian Heir-Apparent, Franz Ferdinand, was to serve as "the convenient pretext for the assassination of a nation." (111) While five days later, on August 1st, The Times added that "a great European Monarchy has denied to a little nation the elementary rights of an independent government." (112)

As could be expected the image of small nations defying much more powerful ones had a great emotional impact on the British public: it was a question of David versus Goliath. Although both Belgium and Serbia were going down to defeat, nevertheless, it was felt that Phoenix-like they would arise again from the ashes of defeat, strengthened and reinvigorated. While the invasion of Belgium was presented as the immediate casus belli, a great deal of attention was focused on Serbia. The sufferings of this small Slavonic state were depicted in great detail in order to galvanize public opinion on the Serbs' behalf and indeed for the war in general. The story of the defeat of the Serbian army at Kosovo in 1389 where the flower of the nation under the command of Prince Lazar perished in a forlorn attempt to halt the advance of the Ottoman Turks into Europe helped to raise Serbia to almost mythical status. Like the Celtic hero Arthur- rex quondam et futurus, Serbia's glorious past would be repeated in the future and, hopefully, with even greater glory. She could hope to be greater and more powerful than before. Naturally, the question of whether she might no longer be this small nation deserving of public sympathy was not even broached. Thanks to scholars and writers

Robert Seton-Watson and D.Elsie Inglis, Kosovo Day on June 28th (the same day that the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated) soon came to be put to good propagandistic purposes. It was comparatively easy to suggest that Prince Lazar and his army had not just been concerned with the narrow interests of Serbia but had in fact been defending the wider interests of the whole of Christian Europe and now, as then, these 'Guardians of the Gate' between East and West were upholding the values of Western civilization. Naturally, this had a particularly influential resonance after the Ottoman Turks had cast in their lot with the Central Powers in 1915. Thus on June 28th 1915, the Kosovo Day Committee declared:

"The Jugoslavs are the gate through which the east tends to break through to the West and vice versa. In the battle of Kosovo, they put forward their utmost strength to shut that gate of the East, and in spite of Kosovo they have given marvellous expression to the significance of that fight. Europe was too late in recognizing the importance of the post at which the Jugoslavs stand between the East and the West. But the Jugoslavs also hold the gate from the West to the East. They are absolutely united in their efforts to keep the gate shut from that side also; but Europe in the interests of the Jugoslavs, and her own as well, must see to it that the Jugoslavs do not shut that gate for their own sake only."(113)

The mystique which was now being spun around the small nationalities of Europe was further boosted by prominent historians like H.A.L. Fisher and James Bryce. For Fisher the small states represented a refreshing and quasi-spiritual antidote to the crass materialism and soul-destroying uniformity of modern day commercial and political life. Indeed he argued:

"One of the principal arguments in favour of the preservation of the small states of Europe...lies in the fact that these small communities do vary from the set type which is imprinted by steady and powerful governments upon the life and behaviour of the larger powers. The mere fact of this variety is an enrichment of human experience and a stimulus to self-criticism and improvement."(114)

As far as Fisher was concerned the small states of Europe occupied a similar role in the general political constellation of Europe as to "the principle of individual liberty operating in any given state." They were in fact a useful corrective to

the "vulgar idea that brute force of organized numbers is the only thing which really matters in the world." (115)

In his Essays and Addresses Lord Bryce made similar comments, arguing that civilization in all its aspects, whether religious, artistic, philosophical or literary and scientific was largely indebted, for example, to the small Italian city states of the Renaissance. (116) Alfred Zimmern explicitly utilized the metaphor of David and Goliath, saying that nationality was "a powerful spiritual weapon" and "the sling in the hands of weak, undeveloped peoples against the Goliath of material progress." (117) At times Zimmern seemed to be arguing that social and economic backwardness were almost positive virtues; however, what he was really trying to say was that small nations had preserved many of the traditional customs and habits which had largely been eradicated from the more advanced European states. The cost of material progress was an ever increasing dull uniformity to such an extent that the individual hardly knew any longer whether he were in Paris, London or New York. (118)

Bryce maintained that the Germans' infatuation with a strong, centralized state was quite understandable given the centuries of political disunity and weakness they had suffered in the days of the Holy Roman Empire. However, now the Germans had gone to the other extreme in creating a highly centralized state with an all-pervasive bureaucracy which represented a deadly threat to a freely functioning, democratic, civil society. The Reich established in 1871 was a highly dehumanizing structure, completely at odds with the 'true human spirit' which required variety and diversity. In spite of the nominal federal structure of the German Empire it was quite obvious that Prussia ruled the roost and had imposed its will on the other German states, forcing them into a mould similar to its own. Yet for humanity to flourish and prosper both individually and collectively more diversity in political structures was required not less. In this way peoples could choose which was best suited to their own particular needs and aspirations. (119)

Both writers like Bryce and statesmen like Lloyd George

found it evidently easy to persuade themselves that in championing the particular cause of the small states of Belgium and Serbia they were in fact championing the much greater and nobler cause of humanity at large, irrespective of time or place. It is no exaggeration to say that this idealization of small nations- 'small is beautiful' to use Schumacher's later happy phrase- had more than a tinge of quasi-mystical and religious sentiment about it. Thus, the New Statesman declared:

"We felt we were engaged in a crusade, and we had for every oppressed nation something of the same feeling that the old crusader had for the holy sepulchre. The small nations shone in the reflected glory of our own Ideals....Never in history had the small nations been set on such a pedestal. They were beautiful and spotless as the virtuous figures in an allegory." (120)

However, the principal reason why the smaller nations deserved liberation was, the New Statesman argued, because their cause reflected the 'Spirit of the Times' or Zeitgeist, as the Germans would say. In fact there was more than an element of irony here since Germany for many centuries had, nolens, volens been the main exponent of kleinstaaterei (small states) but she was now its prime opponent.

In an obvious reference to the many nationalities of the Monarchy the magazine went on to say that even those nations fighting against the Entente Powers were entitled to their freedom- whether they felt 'oppressed' or not. In an article in the Fortnightly Review, entitled 'What will be Austria's Future?' an anonymous British writer, possibly Seton-Watson, since it was inscribed 'V' (possibly a short form of Scotus Viator, his usual nom de plume), declared that if Austria could only emancipate herself from her lethal alliance with Germany, she might yet hope to play an important role in European affairs. In return for basically peripheral concessions to other Balkan states, Austria should be compensated with Prussian Silesia (lost to Frederick the Great in the 18th century) as well as Saxony and Catholic South Germany. (123) Another writer, well-known in both Britain and America, argued that the conflict between Czechs and Germans in Bohemia was not dissimilar to that between Irish and British and could be resolved in both

cases by a large measure of autonomy in the form of 'Home Rule.' Moreover, Brooks maintained, none of the Empire's nationalities seriously entertained complete separation but just wanted respect for their own respective cultural and national identities.(124) Brooks also issued a word of warning to those who wished to destroy the Monarchy in his article 'The Future of Austria-Hungary', declaring that were their aims to be realised, then Tsarist Russia would gain control of the Habsburgs' Slav subjects which no Western statesman should view with equanimity.(125)

Although Sir Henry Johnstone was principally known for his expertise in African affairs, nevertheless, he penned an important article for the journal Nineteenth Century which adopted the same view-point. The Monarchy was an indispensable part of the European state system and its overthrow was unthinkable. Johnstone was enough of a realist to realize that the Monarchy would have to make territorial concessions- to Serbia in the form of Herzegovina, to Montenegro with the Bay of Cattaro (Kotor) and to Russia with the cession of the Ukrainian populated province of Galicia- provided that the latter were united in an autonomous state with Russian Poland.(126) As the war dragged on Johnstone said further concessions would have to be made to Italy and Roumania but, were she to break decisively with Prussia, she could expect compensation in the form of Southern Germany as 'V' had also suggested. "By offering to meet reasonable Italian and Roumanian aspirations" and "by co-operating in the recreation of an independent Poland" the Monarchy "could still play an important part in the political life of Europe." For in the last analysis, Johnstone concluded:

"The Entente Powers could live on brotherly terms with Vienna, since Vienna was not hated as Berlin would be hated for generations to come."(127)

The historian J.A.R. Marriott voiced similar sentiments in the same journal in his article 'Some Issues of the War', written in the late autumn of 1914. Marriott took issue with the whole idea that in an age of nationalism and national states the Monarchy was an anomaly and doomed to go under- as

even the Emperor Franz Joseph himself had suspected. Marriott agreed with Johnstone that it was unavoidable that the Monarchy would lose territory but he maintained that far from weakening the Empire the loss of 'troublesome provinces' could only tend to strengthen it. Like Seton-Watson earlier, Marriott continued to believe that the Habsburgs did indeed have a 'civilizing mission' to perform in South-East Europe. Thus their disappearance from the European scene would be nothing short of disastrous. (129)

Similarly, the geographer Marion L. Newbigin argued that the Monarchy was still "a European necessity"-in Professor Palácky's words- and it could still save itself by timely concessions to the political realities of the modern world. A great deal of criticism of the Monarchy Newbigin thought was essentially beside the point since no state on earth was perfect: "perfection being an attribute of machinery, not of living organisms." (129) The Empire, he thought, would have to accept with as much good grace as possible, the possible union of Serbia and Montenegro, as well as Serbia's right to access to the sea through Northern Albania. The Monarchy would also have to concede at least parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the latter but should be allowed to retain Dalmatia and Croatia. After all, he argued, the cession of these two provinces would be a "hazardous experiment" since a large proportion of the population would almost certainly object to incorporation with Serbia and the loss of Fiume, Hungary's main Adriatic port, would be a disaster for everyone. (130)

While Seton-Watson turned bitterly against the Magyars that he had once praised so highly, the cause of Hungary continued to enjoy important support in certain sections of the British press, particularly with the Conservative Morning Post. Shortly after the war had broken out a leading article entitled 'Our Friend the Enemy' voiced warm sympathy for the Magyars, explaining that the only reason why they were now the enemy was that Hungary through her alliance with Austria found herself on the side of Germany. The Morning Post tried to assure its readers that the majority of the Magyar people

resented this imbroglio bitterly and therefore the British government would do well to try and secure a separate peace with Hungary. Many letters appeared in the paper supporting this line of reasoning, reiterating too the Magyars' supposed traditional virtues: their bravery and nobility, their acute sense of humour and above of all their great love of England. Only the Hungarian Premier, Stephen Tisza, came in for criticism for having betrayed "the splendid traditions of his Motherland." (131) A little strange, perhaps, since Tisza had been the only member of the July Council of Ministers who had held out against the war right up to the eleventh hour.

Particular glowing tributes to the Magyars came from General Arthur Lyttleton-Annesley who warmly endorsed the views expressed in the Morning Post, adding that their bonhomie and hospitality towards outsiders, particularly the British were proverbial. Again he stressed that there was no other country that the Magyars respected and liked than England. According to R.C. Hawkins, who had been one of the delegates of the Liberal Eighty Club to visit Hungary in 1906, the only reason why Hungary was fighting at all was solely because "German and Austrian bayonets were prodding on Hungarian soldiers." (132)

Although it were true that the Magyars were not so popular in left-wing circles, nevertheless, at the beginning of the war, the Manchester Guardian, for one, adopted a fairly benevolent attitude. In January 1915 an article appeared which stressed that for too long Hungary had been viewed from the perspective of Vienna and this perspective needed to be corrected. Contrary to what certain commentators asserted (an obvious reference to writers like Steed and Seton-Watson), the article maintained that the conflict between the Magyars and the other nationalities in Hungary was not a real one but one artificially fostered by the government in Vienna. It was yet another example of the time-honoured policy of 'divide et impera.' In a remarkably optimistic vein the writer declared that the interests of Hungary and the Entente Powers were essentially the same and were the Allies to guarantee Hungary's territorial integrity as a whole then the Magyars would "cheerfully sacrifice some

of the wholly nationalist areas." (133) While the Guardian was not to publish any further articles sympathetic to the Magyars again, the socialist New Age was to continue to do so. Even in the final months of the war when the cause of Hungary was very much a lost one this literary and political review published a series of articles by one Leighton J. Warnock, which argued that while the Habsburg Empire was probably doomed, Hungary might yet be saved. Warnock further argued that it would be in the interest of the Allies "to work with the progressive Magyars" (134) so as to ensure the easier reconstruction of political order in East-Central Europe at the end of the war. It was obvious that the traditional myth of progressive Magyars versus 'backward Slavs' was not totally exorcized, even on the Left.

When war broke out in 1914 a fair number of Magyars found themselves trapped in England and some of them attempted to use the occasion to at least make the attempt to influence the British public and government in Hungary's favour. The sinking of the neutral American vessel, the Lusitania, in the Spring of 1915, by a German submarine caused widespread international outrage. Accordingly a group of Hungarians decided to organize a protest meeting to demonstrate that Hungarians were as outraged at this barbaric act as anyone in the Allied countries. Although the meeting never took place, since it was banned by the police, one of the organizers, Joseph Szebenyi, declared that, nevertheless, he and his compatriots wanted it to be put on record that they "totally disassociated themselves from this act of barbarism" and "to express their unbounded regret that their country was still allied with the enemies of humanity." (135)

Joseph Szebenyi was in fact the author of many of the pro-Magyar articles that appeared in the pages of the Morning Post and in fact the perpetrator of one of the audacious acts of deception in the history of the British press. The articles were entitled 'From Our Correspondent, Budapest' and practically everyone, including Robert Seton-Watson, believed that the articles were indeed written in Hungary and then smuggled out with the connivance of the Hungarian authorities. It was only in late 1916 that Seton-Watson discovered that

they had actually been written by Szebenyi in London. (136) Szebenyi was an extremely artful journalist, painting what appeared a highly authentic account of wartime Hungary. His attempts to depict the Magyars in the most favourable light possible had the support both of the editor, H.A. Gwynne and the proprietor, Lady Bathurst. The reason for this was that both editor and proprietor were suspicious of the ambitions of Yugoslav, Slovak and Roumanian politicians to Hungarian territory. This concern to preserve the integrity of the Hungarian state made them willing to give Szebenyi a wide degree of latitude in what he was permitted to write. While this sympathy for Hungary was later to be overwhelmed by the need to defeat Germany at all cost, nevertheless, it is quite extraordinary that the Morning Post with its well-known anti-German jingoism should remain pro-Magyar for so long.

Szebenyi was astute enough to realize that the problem of Hungary's nationalities could ^{not} be ignored indefinitely, especially after Seton-Watson's seminal work on the subject, but he deliberately kept his comments low key. Since certain Slav regiments had defected to the Russians in Galicia he could scarcely pretend that all was well amongst the subject nationalities of the Kingdom but he attempted to deflect any criticism by saying that Hungary was a victim too; that the Magyars were used as a weapon by Austria and the Habsburgs "to chastize the other peoples of the Empire." It was to be regretted that Hungary had been manipulated into serving the imperial ambitions of Vienna, but this was the fact of the situation- the traditional apologia pro vita sua of Magyar propagandists. (138) Two or three of Szebenyi's articles appeared every week, invariably stressing the Magyars' love of all things English and their intense dislike of Austria and Germany. Indeed, according to Szebenyi this dislike was so great that the average Magyar would rather be fighting with the Allies against the two Germanic Powers. Opposition to the war was widespread, he suggested, and the rumours of an early peace had the enthusiastic support of both government and people alike when they were broached in the first months of 1915.

"The outstanding feature of the press of Hungary today is",

Szebenyi ventured, "the profound belief that peace is near", (140) and he went on to quote from an article written by Count Andrassy in March in which peace terms were allegedly already being discussed. Szebenyi was to return to this theme a year later, saying that "'a day of peace' was to be proclaimed in Hungarian schools" and "the children will pray for peace to come soon, and the teachers will explain to them what peace means." Szebenyi tried to reassure the readers of the Morning Post that this was neither mere speculation nor fantasizing but grounded in the undeniable fact that the Magyars could not bear to see the suffering of innocent children. Children were always the innocent victims who if they did not know the reasons for war, knew that it meant "no meat, no butter, and for the last week no potatoes." (141)

While Szebenyi gave considerable space to the suffering of the home population he was keen to emphasize that it was not mainly material hardship that galvanized the anti-war movement but the fundamental antagonism of the average Magyar to both Austria and Germany. The dividing line between fact and fantasy, Szebenyi's protestations notwithstanding, became increasingly blurred in the articles that he wrote for the Morning Post. Prima facie, they had a certain degree of plausibility about them- their point de départ had some basis in fact but it was the twist that Szebenyi gave to real events that marked him out as a master of dissimulation and- in modern parlance- of the techniques of disinformation. Thus, in an article of November 27th 1914 Szebenyi described in graphic detail the panic occasioned in Hungary by the Russian invasion of Galicia which brought back bitter memories of 1849 when the Tsar Nicholas's armies had helped crush the Hungarian revolution. (142) However, in a flight of fantasy, Szebenyi then went on to suggest the prominent Magyar politicians, Károlyi and Vazsonyi were preparing to overthrow the Hungarian government and then to march on Vienna. As usual Szebenyi made great play of the allegedly supreme Magyar virtues of honour and decency in contrast to the supposedly intrinsic German failings of barbarism and inhumanity. According to Szebenyi the Magyars had

never subscribed to the amoral doctrine that 'the ends justifies the means'; on the contrary the Magyars as a people "had always been the standard bearer of chivalry and fair play in war and peace alike." (143)

Like lady Macbeth Szebenyi rather tended to overplay his hand 'by protesting too much' especially when he continually proclaimed the Magyar disdain for all things Teutonic and their unquenchable desire for complete independence. Again there was a certain element of truth in what he had to say. Led by Károlyi, Apponyi, Louis Kossuth, Andrássy and Esterhazy, the Independence Party had, Szebenyi maintained, been opposed to the war from its inception, and the party was a force to be reckoned with counting 137 members of parliament and a nation-wide network of some 7,000 clubs and societies. To the question why if the party were as powerful as he claimed, had it failed to stop the war, Szebenyi countered by saying that only the fiercely repressive measure of the government in Vienna had prevented this. However, now that the Russian armies were approaching from the East the time was ripe for the party to move into action and to secure both peace and complete independence. According to Szebenyi, Tisza had himself said that since Hungary was technically already an independent state linked only with Austria through the person of the monarch, Hungary had every right to defend its frontiers as it saw fit, even if this entailed negotiations for a separate peace without Austria. Tisza's speech to parliament to this effect had been met, Szebenyi affirmed, with rapture: "Never was there such applause, never were cheers so deafening.." (144) The Magyars' desire for peace, seemingly at all costs, was a theme that Szebenyi was to return to time and again. Reluctantly, he was forced to admit that, of course, the war did have support in certain quarters but for this he tended to heap the blame on Tisza- somewhat curiously given his praise for the latter's speech to the Hungarian Deputies. (145) However, consistency and logic were not factors that worried Szebenyi unduly. (Not unusual, of course, amongst propagandists or politicians, for that matter.)

Szebenyi tried to substantiate his claim that the Magyars were enthusiastic about anything to do with England by mentioning as often as he could any literary or cultural activity that had the slightest connection with her. Thus, on December 12th, he wrote:

"I must not forget to tell you that last night at the Főrnarosi Orphenum (one of Budapest's largest music-halls) I heard an English girl singing a Hungarian song in English. She had a great success and had to sing it again and again...In fact nobody can realise here that we are at war with England. The English baroness who owns the Cafe Hepopera is just as popular as she ever was, and nobody thinks of going to another cafe because that one is owned by an Englishwoman." (146)

In a similar vein, two months later (February 1915), Szebenyi wrote:

"It may be interesting to mention that though we are at war with England English literature is quite a feature in the Press and theatres in Hungary. One of the most pro-German papers publishes a serial from Rider Haggard, entitled 'The Necklace of the Wanderer'; a great cinema is advertising a Conan Doyle series of pictures. 'The Little Lord' is the name of a play in the Magyar theatre, and other popular English serials are published in the weeklies." (147)

From articles like these it was clear that the Morning Post intended to raise the morale of its readers by suggesting that the Entente Powers could not fail to be successful if here in the heart of the Central Powers there was so much pro-English feeling. (148) The Morning Post also advanced the argument that a German victory would actually be disastrous for Hungary since:

"Hungary, like Turkey, is the ass in the fable which goes hunting with the lion. The lion may secure the spoils: the ass is secure of nothing but danger and hard knocks. We suggest to Hungary in the hour of Germany's success the cause of Hungary was never in greater danger." (149)

In April 1915, another editorial declared that in the even of such a victory, Hungary would be reduced to no more than "a mere appanage of the German Power" since Germany's success would immeasurably strengthen the position of German Austria vis-a-vis the Magyars within the Dual Monarchy. In this respect, the Morning Post, argued the Entente was fighting

as much for the freedom of Hungary as for Poland. Hungary had many sympathizers within England and their position would be bolstered even further if the people of Hungary could even "at the eleventh hour free their country from the fatal embrace of their allies." (150)

Somewhat myopically the Morning Post never seemed to consider that the discontent of the subject nationalities of the Kingdom might represent a serious threat to the country's integrity. The Slovaks as a people were not mentioned at all and neither were the Serbs who inhabited large swathes of territory in Southern Hungary (the Vojvodina). The Morning Post seemed to think that Serbia could be satisfactorily appeased with the cession of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Dalmatia, in other words, largely at the expense of Austria- although technically Bosnia-Herzegovina was a joint possession or condominium of both Austria and Hungary.

As far as this Conservative paper was concerned the only nationality that could conceivably threaten the territorial integrity of Hungary were the Roumanians who, inhabiting large areas of eastern Hungary (Transsylvania) might seek to detach that province and join their compatriots across the Carpathians. As a result the Morning Post was continually urging the Magyars to come to some understanding with the Entente Powers, or at the very least, declare their forthright opposition to the war effort of Germany and Austria. As 1916 approached the Morning Post redoubled its efforts in a vain attempt to keep Roumania out of the war. (151)

Significantly, when a Russian correspondent asked whether the Morning Post wanted to maintain the historic 'Lands of the Crown of St. Stephen' in their entirety or merely the ethnically Magyar areas of Hungary, the paper remained noticeably silent. (152) The parti pris stance of the Morning Post, however, had been graphically demonstrated in an earlier editorial of August 22nd 1914 when the paper urged the British government to declare that the Allies had no design on Hungarian territory at all. (153)

Whether the Morning Post seriously believed that Hungary could or would detach itself from its allies is a moot point.

Quite obviously, though, the paper's principal aim was to convey the most favourable image possible of the Magyars and their country. Any connections with Austria were, accordingly, marginalized and downplayed. Thus, very rarely did the Morning Post refer to the Imperial and Royal Army (Kaiserliche und Königlich-K.u.K) but only to the specifically Hungarian Honved regiments or the 'Austrian' army, although many Hungarians served in it. The paper's unashamedly pro-Magyar stance only came to an end in August 1916 when Roumania did eventually enter the war on the Allies' side and Szebenyi, who had been in England all the time, was interned. Even so, as late as April 1917, the Morning Post felt obliged to fire a salvo at those who had "unjustly vilified" it (an obvious reference to Seton-Watson and those grouped around the journal New Europe). The paper said it had no intention of apologizing for sympathizing with the Hungarian Independence Party and refusing "to support people who apparently hope more from conglomerate nationalities of whose existence we had not known before the war." (154) Again the reference was clearly to Seton-Watson and company along with an echo of Chamberlain's later remark: "A far off land of which we know nothing."

The treatment of Szebenyi's detention was also illuminating. The Morning Post mentioned en passant that Szebenyi had been a member of the Hungarian Independence Party, who had provided the paper with useful information. But since the paper pointedly failed to mention that Szebenyi had been interned in England, the distinct impression was given to its readership that Szebenyi had been interned by the Hungarian government as an outspoken opponent of the Central Powers. The fact that the paper-mischievously one might say- continually referred to him as 'Our Special Correspondent in Budapest', naturally, reinforced this impression.

The Morning Post's pro-Magyar stance was sufficiently impressive and effective to arouse the concern of Robert Seton-Watson and the journal New Europe associated with him as well as The Times and journals like Everyman. Seton-Watson's anxiety was such that he devoted two books to refuting the political pretensions of the narrow oligarchy that ruled

Hungary, entitled German, Slav and Magyar and Roumania and the Great War. Both books set out to demonstrate that the Slavs and the Roumanians were quite capable of governing themselves without the despotism, enlightened or otherwise, of either Magyars or Germans.(156) Writing in The Nation George Trevelyan pointed out that the lurid scenes of Austrian hangmen dispensing summary justice to modern Hampdens and Pym (the 17th century Parliamentarians that opposed Charles I in England) harkened back to the Magyar revolution of 1848-9 and was scarcely relevant to the situation in 1914, as the Morning Post tried to pretend. In fact, Trevelyan maintained, the main onus for the war lay with the Magyar nobility not the Austrian Germans who were "more sinned against than sinning." Indeed, it was the Magyar oligarchy's oppression of the subject nationalities that had embroiled Austria in the war in the first place. One of the greatest critics of the Magyars after Seton-Watson was Stefan Osusky who wrote in the journal Everyman that "the Magyar was as arrant a Hun as the Prussian." (157) The Pall Mall Gazette echoed these sentiments, saying "the brutality of the Magyars was one of the main obstacles to peace" and voiced its regret that "hypocritical prating of liberty had deceived the sentimentalists." (158) The Times too took aim at the Morning Post, declaring that the Allied governments were only too aware of Hungary's responsibility for the war "to be deluded by any subterranean intrigues in which she might engage." (159) The articles which had appeared in "another newspaper" (The Morning Post) were in fact a part of this "subterranean intrigue" and "a pure fiction." (159) Ostensibly "from a Hungarian source" they were no less than a cunning ploy to gain a sympathetic ear from the Allied public, particularly by the constant repetition of the theme that "the Magyars were ready to break away from the Austrian connection." (160)

It was at this point that The Times weighed in with Henry Wickham Steed's theory about the real meaning of the Dualist System in Austria-Hungary. In essence it was, as indicated in the relevant chapter on Steed and Seton-Watson, the means by which the Magyars could through their alliance with the

Austrian Germans- and by extension Imperial Germany- could hold down their subject nationalities. It was also the means by which the Magyar oligarchy had frustrated the ability of the Emperor Franz Joseph in his capacity as King of Hungary, to aid the Slavs and Roumanians under their rule. As King of Hungary Franz Josph's authority was circumscribed by the constitutional oath that he had sworn in 1867 at the time of the Ausgleich. The fact that the Heir-Apparent, Franz Ferdinand had given clear proof that he intended to put an end to the shameful shackles that had been imposed on the Habsburg dynasty, made his death in Magyar ruling circles not unwelcome- or so The Times implied. It was the Magyars oppressive rule of their subject peoples that had inflamed the domestic situation in Hungary and had driven the racial antagonisms of South-East Europe to such an impasse that war had become inevitable, as Franz Ferdinand had feared. The Times made no attempt to exonerate the Austrian Germans completely from responsibility but argued that they were more to be pitied than feared since their alliance with an originally non-European people had allowed their destiny to be determined by "an alien élite."

"The truth of the matter is that Vienna is an empty shell. While military matters are largely under the control of Berlin, the Habsburg capital is dominated- in absentia- by an alien people, different in spirit, customs, and traditions- the Magyars."(161)

The Times gave prominent space to the reports of both the so-called 'Neutral Observer' as well as the views of Wickham Steed. According the 'Observer' the Magyars far from lamenting their participation in the war were in fact proud of the role they had in fermenting it, believing that it gave them the ideal opportunity to strengthen their hold on both parts of the Monarchy and not just the Hungarian half. (The fact that it had been the Hungarian Premier Stephen Tisza who had warned of the dangers of war, whether successful or not, was quietly forgotten.)

The Times was nothing if not thorough and went on to publish all its anti-Magyar articles in a seperate booklet. The booklet was accompanied by a detailed map, showing Hungary

in all its ethnic complexity. The point was well made- or so The Times thought: how iniquitous it was that this alien Asiatic people had subjected so many of the smaller nations of Europe to its oppressive rule.(162)

As far as the British government was concerned attitudes vis-à-vis the Dual Monarchy were decidedly confused. As has been seen the only definite statement on war aims as far as Austria-Hungary was concerned had been made by Asquith in November 1914 and then in the secret Foreign Office Memorandum of 1916. Ambivalence and confusion were perhaps scarcely surprising since the government's attention was focused on the chief enemy-Imperial Germany. If the Monarchy were not exactly an afterthought it was a matter of secondary consideration. The Prime Minister, Asquith, was always reluctant to comment on foreign affairs and thus it was left to Sir Edward Grey to make this point about the uncertainty of the government's attitude towards Austria-Hungary, not only at the beginning of the war but later still. In Grey's words:

"The skein of Allied diplomacy was so tangled that to unravel it and show it as a consistent whole is not possible....circumstances were always changing.... Diplomacy had to adapt itself to what happened on the battle front...in war words only count in so far as they are backed by force and victories."(163)

The cynically minded, however, might say that 'confusion' can be useful for a diplomatist, an artful excuse for subterfuge and deviousness. Certainly the Serbs thought so when they discovered by the secret Sykes-Pycott agreements of 1915 the lands which they had been promised in Dalmatia on the grounds of nationality-ostensibly what the Allies were fighting for- had in fact been mortgaged to Italy.(1915)

Confusion or not some idea of the British government's thinking can be gleaned from the informal discussions that the Russian ambassador, Count Paul Benckendorff, had with both Ministers and prominent Conservative politicians in September 1914. According to Benckendorff, the British government would be willing to accept the Russian annexation of both the Ukrainian-speaking areas of the Bukowina and

Galicia but the Polish-speaking region of the latter should be amalgamated with an autonomous Polish state to be formed out of Russia's western provinces. In important respects this was a resurrection of the Congress Kingdom of Poland created by the diplomats at Vienna in 1815: the Tsar of Russia-or possibly another member of the House of Romanov- would be enshrined as King. Austria-Hungary would also have to surrender territory to both Italy and Roumania, provided of course these countries were to declare war on the Central Powers. In this advent Italy would be rewarded with the Trentino (South Tyrol), while Roumania would gain Transylvania. As for the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "these provinces should be divided between Serbia and Montenegro." Were such a programme to be carried out, the Monarchy would naturally be much reduced in size. What would remain would be basically the German-speaking area of Austria and the Magyar-speaking area of Hungary, along with the Czech and Slovak lands and Dalmatia- including Trieste and Istria. (164)

Winston Churchill as the First Lord of the Admiralty also made great play with the issue of nationality, saying that it was the moral and political duty of the Entente Powers "to secure the liberation of the imprisoned nationalities in the grip of the Habsburg." Churchill claimed that he had little doubt the Allies would triumph for "England would win in the end as she always has" and "Russia is invincible." (165)

Some thirty years later, during the course of the Second World War, Churchill was to execute a complete volte face in this respect, lamenting the fact that there was no longer in existence a powerful Habsburg Empire that could act as a barrier to any possible threat from the East. (Although allies in the struggle against Nazi Germany it was quite obvious that Churchill had the Soviet Union in mind.) However, as usually the case, the political needs of the moment outweighed any long term considerations and in 1914 the immediate concern was to win the war against Germany. If Austria-Hungary were not exactly "the soft underbelly" of the Central Powers, as Churchill was later to describe Italy in 1943, it was the weaker of the two main enemy powers.

It was evident then that a variety of opinions existed vis-à-vis the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the peoples that lived in it when war broke out in the summer of 1914. These opinions were by no means rigid but to change *pari passu* with the demands and needs of the war as Allied statesmen came to see them. After Austria-Hungary's assault on Serbia and Germany's invasion of Belgium, the slogan 'freedom for small nations' served as a useful stick with which to beat the Central Powers, although the full implications of espousing the doctrine of nationality were not to be elaborated until much later in the war. In fact even after 1917 there was to be considerable vacillation and ambivalence when it came to apply this doctrine to the Monarchy. Many Liberals- particularly of the Cobden and Bright school- were, at first, hostile to the Empire's small nationalities and were, basically, in favour of the status quo, although they did not exclude some form of autonomy for the various peoples such as through a federal reconstruction of the Empire as a whole. Other Liberals, however, actually became more hostile to the smaller nationalities as the war dragged on, seeing them as a serious obstacle to a compromise peace since an Allied victory seemed highly problematic. Demands that the war be continued in order to satisfy the alleged wishes of 'obscure peoples' were regarded as thoroughly unreasonable demands to pursue an unwinnable war which had already cost an enormous amount of Allied lives and great material damage. Socialists with their general international *Weltanschauung* and overwhelming concern for economic and social issues were equally hostile and suspicious of nationality questions as far as the Empire's subject nationalities were concerned. For them all national issues were an unwelcome distraction from the class struggle and fundamentally incompatible or at odds with the ultimate aims of the socialist movement. Thus, it was hardly surprising that left-wing magazines like the *New Statesman* only came belatedly to sympathize with the Czechs and Roumanians. As it happened only the Conservatives consistently advocated the disruption of the Habsburg Empire and this had more to do with tactics than principle. Whatever their philosophical point de

vue in theory- the respect for tradition and the like- in practice they proved to be remarkably pragmatic. The question of the right to national self-determination played little or no part in their calculations- rather the Leitmotif was 'whatever it takes' to win the war. If the defeat of 'Prussianism' required the overthrow of the oldest Conservative Monarchy in Europe, however paradoxical this might seem, then so be it. Necessity certainly knows no bounds and no doubt Conservatives appreciated the apparent irony of their situation. In any case whatever the claims of the Czechs, for instance, to a great historic past or the Serbs to an equally imposing future might be, Conservative support for their cause was essentially a means to an end and scarcely out of regard for the principle of self-determination per se.

PART 11**b**

PRESSURE GROUPS, PRESS AND PUBLIC OPINION THEIR INFLUENCE ON OFFICIAL POLICY

The influence of the writings of what may be conveniently labelled as 'Austrophobes' and 'Austrophiles' on the formation of public opinion in the years leading up to the outbreak of war was undoubtedly significant but difficult to quantify exactly. Even more difficult to assess is their impact on government circles although certain personal and/or administrative connections can be indicated. Public opinion can be an extremely nebulous affair, especially in the case of Austria-Hungary, where comparatively little was known and therefore the influence of public sentiment refracted through the articles and speeches of pro and anti-Habsburg spokesmen again hard to gauge.

It would appear that no particular pressure group, whether financial, humanitarian or naval, had any large measure of influence over British policy vis-à-vis Austria-Hungary. As far as naval policy was concerned, the Foreign Office had, initially, looked askance at the policy of concentrating the fleet in the North Sea away from its traditional bases on the south coast to Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, with Hardinge, for one, commenting: "This is not the manner in which the British Empire has been built up." (1) However, by 1909, as Mensdorff discovered, this redeployment of the fleet after 1906, was intimately linked as were all European and foreign questions in the eyes of the British government with the ever growing power of Germany. (2) Thus, any projected increase in the power of the Austro-Hungarian fleet, Germany's principal ally, was bound to raise alarm, as Count Tarnowski pointed out, as has been seen. The naval scare of 1909 was only accentuated by the outcome of the Bosnian crisis when the British press drew attention to the fact that a powerful military and naval bloc was the sine qua non for a successful diplomatic policy and that Austria's naval plans were "a new factor on the sea" (3) that could not be lightly ignored. In spite of the Monarchy's protestations to the contrary the British government was convinced that this "new factor" was indeed a potential threat to British interests, but it is important to

underline that it was political considerations i.e the diplomatic position of the Dual Monarchy, that conditioned naval policy and not vice versa. (Interestingly, one might add, the British government showed markedly less concern over Italy's naval ambitions.) Aehrenthal, for his part, tried to utilize the fact that the British were already counting on an increase in the Austro-Hungarian fleet as a foregone conclusion to thwart opposition to it in the Council of Ministers, notorious for their parsimony when it came to armament expenditure, particularly naval and especially from the Hungarian side.(4) No attempt was made on the part of either Britain or Austria-Hungary to come to some sort of modus vivendi as far as naval construction was concerned and each side carried on building as they saw fit.

It also seems that commercial and financial pressure groups did not have a significant impact on official government policy either. At the beginning of the century there had been some friction in the commercial arena with the strict limitation, for example, of Austrian immigration to New Zealand, but this had practically ended by 1907. Of greater significance was the fact that the parliamentary chaos that bedevilled the Monarchy after 1903 made all British governments wary about close co-operation in forging commercial agreements with the Balkan states, which had previously not been the case.(5) It could be said, however, that Britain did nothing to help matters but, in fact, effectively 'poured oil on troubled waters' by pressing the Brussels Sugar Convention to put an end to the sugar cartels of which Austria-Hungary was the chief benefactor.(6) In a quite striking example of hypocrisy and double standards Britain pointedly refused to apply the convention to her own self-governing dominions such as Australia and Canada, Austrian protests notwithstanding. (1902)(7) 'To add salt to the wound', so to speak, in 1907, the British then decided unilaterally to alter it, even though the government knew perfectly well that this would aggravate the already fraught negotiations between the two halves of the Monarchy in the conclusion of a new commercial Ausgleich.(8) A further source of conflict was to emerge in the so-called 'Pig War' between Serbia and Austria-

Hungary when the economic boycott of Serbian livestock and agricultural produce was not shared by Britain, which indeed took advantage of the Empire's predicament to increase her own share of the Serbian market. This, however, was effectively the last time that high politics was noticeably affected by commercial factors.(1906)(9)

Similarly, financial considerations per se were not a determining factor in Grey's diplomacy. It is certainly true that Grey advanced as an argument the protection of financial interests in the Ottoman Empire when he wanted to counter the deep-seated anti-Turkish sentiments of the Balkan Committee- of which more in a moment- but, equally, when he wanted to exert pressure on the Sultan he adduced the complaints of important financial circles as the reason. Political considerations too were paramount in the Foreign Secretary's mind when the decision was taken to quash the projected plan for a loan to Hungary.(10) When the Sandjak of Novi Bazaar was evacuated by Aehrenthal in 1908 he was still, nevertheless keen to finance the Sandjak Railway Project but the British government had no intention of facilitating this, either directly or indirectly, by any loans, since the view was held that it was not so much Austria-Hungary's commercial interests involved here but her political ones- the road to Salonika still being on her agenda. This, however, had something in the making of a self-fulfilling prophecy as far as closer ties between Vienna and Berlin were concerned since the Monarchy was now forced, *faute de mieux*, to seek the aid of the Rothschilds. Such a course of action was, as the British consul-general in Budapest complained "forging yet another link in the chain which binds the Dual Monarchy to Germany-nolens volens."(11) On the Austrian side while powerful political opposition on the part of the Magyar landed interest could force Aehrenthal to give up any hopes of conciliating Serbia by a favourable commercial treaty, the opposition of economic interests to the boycott imposed by the Turks after the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, could not.

The most important pressure group concerned with Anglo-Austrian relations was the Balkan Committee founded by Noel Buxton in 1903 in conjunction with James Bryce and Henry

Nevinson. Buxton was decidedly 'the leading light' in the Committee, becoming its president in 1907 after Bryce's appointment as ambassador to Washington. Also figuring prominently were Bouchier, The Times Balkan correspondent and a number of leading Anglican clergymen, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, concerned with the fate of their Christian co-religionists under Muslim rule- Mensdorff's "boring bishops". (12) Grey, in common with the rest of the Foreign Office, had grave misgivings about the Committee with its harsh criticism of Turkey and its equally resounding praise of Bulgaria although he came to Buxton's defence when Aehrenthal caustically labelled him as "a professional trouble-maker"(13), after the latter's 'toing and froing' in the Balkans. Although Grey would sometimes mention the influence of the Committee and that of the Macedonian Relief Committee- of which Buxton was also a member- as one reason for his Macedonian reform proposals, Grey had already determined on a particular course of action without any regard for the Committee, Aehrenthal's suspicions notwithstanding. As it happened Buxton, along with a fellow Committee member Masterman, even had the privilege of being accorded a personal interview with the Austrian Foreign Minister in November 1907, who like Grey accepted their memoranda but without being drawn into any discussion of government policy.(14)

In spite of the negative impressions that Aehrenthal received, Noel was to conclude that Austria-Hungary was an important factor for peace and was to consistently oppose those who advocated its destruction, making a particular attempt later to convert Lloyd George to his views.(15) Buxton came to believe that the rights of the smaller nationalities within the Empire could be adequately protected by its federal reorganisation especially since complete independence was hardly a universal demand by its slavonic and latin populations. From another point of view too, the overthrow of the Monarchy could only bring the unwelcome prospect of involving Russia in central european affairs, and then when war came in 1914 of prolonging that war indefinitely.(16) From 1916 onwards Noel, together with Commander Wedgwood, and Lord Paramoor inter alios, championed the cause of the so-called 'rational peace movement', advocating a

compromise peace. Not wishing to alienate the public by fiery anti-war articles and speeches their strategy was one of 'fortiter in re et suaviter in modo', seeking to influence both Ministers and Members of Parliament alike by private pressure behind the scenes. They adopted a similar tactic with regard to those whom they considered as persons of influence in society, whispering seemingly persuasive arguments in their ears on a one to one basis.(17)

With regard to the British press the government possessed no direct control over it, which, generally speaking, the authorities in both Vienna and Budapest appreciated. The fact that there was no such thing as a press bureau 'to give a lead' was regretted by some British statesmen such as Lord Rosebery at the time of the crisis over Bosnia, as we have seen. The vituperation against Aehrenthal distressed him greatly and even his former close rapport with the proprietor of The Times, Lord Northcliffe was unable to assuage it.(18) Grey, for his part, maintained, as he did, in a speech to the Newspaper Society on May 6th 1909 that "the press was completely independent" although he added the rider: "There was often co-operation..but always co-operation between press and Foreign Office without there being collusion."(19) Grey was willing to concede that the press was always a factor in his and the government's calculations since no foreign policy could be carried on for long without the support or at least forbearance of the press. Any course of action that the British newspaper world heartedly disapproved of would scarcely be feasible in the short term let alone the long term. Vienna was naturally perfectly aware that there was no equivalent of the 'Universal Machtmittel' (the continental subsidy) in British newspaper life and given that the press commanded large advertising revenues, it could not be suborned financially by the government. Grey was, however, being less than frank and indeed somewhat coy when he elided certain questions about the sometimes close interdependence of press and Foreign Office since it was commonly known on Fleet Street that the Westminster Gazette along with The Times, Morning Post and Daily Telegraph regularly discussed their reports with officials from the Foreign Office as to the advisability or not of the

publication of certain articles. A kind of 'moral control' thus existed, which Mensdorff considered the British government exercised sparingly, unless issues of great national (20) significance were involved. On the other hand, Mensdorff suspected that the government was on occasion more than a little cattivo (impish)- as the Italians say. While it was true that the Foreign Office dropped hints that the British press was 'going over the top' at the time of the Bosnian crisis(21) the very fact that it was nigh on impossible to secure the publishing of any articles favourable to Austria-Hungary's point of view gave grounds for Mensdorff to wonder whether an 'unofficial' mot d'ordre had not emanated from the Foreign Office(22).

That the government could influence the press when it seriously desired to can be seen in 1904 when in spite of the alliance between Britain and Japan the attacks on Russia were so virulent that the Foreign Office intervened to warn the press to moderate its tone, much to the surprise and annoyance of the Japanese Minister.(23) Again in October 1911 when the press began a vitriolic campaign against Italy for her North African ambitions- the seizure of Tripoli from Turkey- Nicolson let it be known that he was "exceedingly vexed"(24) and that put an effective end to it. However, when it came to the question of Bosnia in 1908 it was clear to Mensdorff that the British government was quietly sanctioning 'righteous indignation' against the Monarchy and therefore, it was blatantly disingenuous of Hardinge to then claim that "there would have been no Anglo-Austrian estrangement but for the press."(25)

At the Ballhausplatz, it had even less influence when dealing with British newspapers and journals. Apart from the rumour- never substantiated- that the National Review "was in receipt of largesse from Russia"(26), the British press seems to have been strikingly immune from either foreign influence or foreign money. At the height of the Bosnian crisis Aehrenthal was to become seriously annoyed with Mensdorff for his failure to have any impact on the British press but the inability of the German chargé d'affaires to mitigate the invective being thrown against both Germany and Austria convinced Mensdorff that this was a forelorn endeavour if not a completely lost cause.(27) (28)

In spite of his personal conviction as to the futility of the exercise Mensdorff did at least make the attempt by engaging in a series of conversations with Francis Knollys, Edward VII's private secretary and the Rothschilds in the hope that they might be able to persuade the editors of the Daily Telegraph and The Times to at least give the British public a fairer idea of Austria's side of the story- but to no avail.(29) The Ballhausplatz itself effectively acknowledged such endeavours as a complete waste of time by washing its hands of the entire British press only responding to the occasional exceptionally caustic article emanating from the pen of Wickham Steed.

All in all, it can be said that the British press was left very much to its own devices. The notoriously anti-German triumvirate of The Times, Daily Telegraph and the Morning Post were by no means united in their attitude to Germany's major ally, Austria-Hungary. The Times- and this was scarcely a surprise- usually adopted Steed's approach(30), while the Daily Telegraph- disparagingly dismissed by Louis Mallet, the Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, as "an opposition newspaper that nobody reads"(31) was, initially, highly favourable to the Empire, particularly the Emperor, Franz Joseph himself. However, in 1908, as a direct result of the Bosnian affair, it executed a complete volte face, even to the extent of leading the pack of press hounds baying and barking at the Monarchy's heels. The most supportive of all was the Morning Post which was the only newspaper to give Sir Charles Dilke's speech in the House of Commons defending Austria's action a sympathetic hearing.(32) In Mensdorff's view, the best edited paper was undoubtedly the Westminster Gazette, the importance of which too lay in the fact that it more than any other journal gave a sharper insight into the way the Foreign Office was really thinking.(33) It was the Westminster Gazette that effectively dropped a political bombshell in Vienna when it published an article by Lucien Wolf in October 1909 demanding an international conference to legalise the Bosnian settlement- an article which bizarrely neither represented the views of the paper itself nor that of the Foreign Office.(34) As far as the popular press was concerned both the Daily Express and the Standard were rumoured to have substantial links with the Balkan

Committee and the Daily Mail often gave vent to its suspicions that the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin was the *éminence grise* behind Austria's naval plans.

Turning to Austria-Hungary, in contrast, one can say that the Habsburg authorities had a very effective means of influencing the press through the Literarisches Bureau which was an integral part of the Ballhausplatz itself. Indeed, the Bureau's very *raison d'être* lay in planting articles favourable to government policy in the press.(35) British statesmen long suspected that this was the case and Mensdorff himself confirmed it when he noted in his diary in December 1908: "These accusations are unfortunately true...although I don't admit it."(36) Mensdorff, too, was to declare that "our Press Department bore a fearful responsibility"(37) for the fracas of June 1910 in which the perennial problem of Crete once more threatened to spill into war between Greece and Turkey. The Neue Freie Presse also helped to pour fuel on the flames by publishing an article on the 11th of that month highlighting serious differences between Britain and France about what to do about it plus the openly pro-Greek and anti-Turkish sentiments of the new British King George V. Aehrenthal issued his usual disclaimer of *non mea culpa* but the British side was less than convinced. The Austrian Foreign Minister went on to argue that it was actually the French not the Austrian press that first raised the issue and that it was Steed, his *bête noire*, in Vienna who had insinuated that the Austro-Hungarian government was behind the campaign to drive a wedge between Britain and France over whether the island should be reoccupied by the Protecting Powers or effectively ceded to Greece. While it was almost certainly true that Aehrenthal would have liked to chain the Protecting Powers to the 'Promethean rock' of Crete on behalf of Turkey by a reoccupation which, for financial reasons the French wanted to do, rather than annexation to Greece, as Hardinge espoused, he was probably telling the truth (in this instance) of all responsibility for the affair. Quite mischevously (*cattivo!*), in an obvious dig at Britain (*touché*, so to speak), he defended the right of the Austrian press to "engage in fair criticism."(38)

Most of the Foreign Office's information about the Monarchy

came decidedly from Steed, The Times correspondent in Vienna, especially during the time that Sir Edward Goschen was the ambassador there.(1905-08) The only known survey of the views and opinions to be found in both the Austrian and Hungarian press was almost certainly the work of Steed(39). It was Steed too that popularized the view that the press bureaux of both Austria-Hungary and Germany worked largely hand in hand with mutual rapport between the journalists of both countries when the interests of their own were not involved- in other words vis-a-vis the actions and opinions of third parties. Whether an actual 'convention' to that fact formally existed is arguable but Sir Fairfax Cartwright, for one, was convinced that the Austrian press took its cue from Berlin and as a consequence "was likely to go wild"(40) unless the Habsburg authorities chose to restrain it. Strangely enough reports from Reuters in English from London had to go first to Berlin to be translated since the Vienna telegraph agency would not accept them- giving rise to the suspicion that they were either mistranslated or even tampered with en route.(41)

However, whatever Steed may have thought, the Austrian press did not always follow Berlin as assiduously as even Cartwright believed. During the second Morocco crisis of 1911 the Monarchy's newspapers were decidedly lukewarm in their support for Germany in the latter's conflict with France- much to the annoyance of Berlin.(42) Nor was the press completely at the disposal of the Ballhausplatz. Almost certainly, for one, Theodore Russell, Grey's former private secretary, who was attached to the British embassy in Vienna between the years 1908-14 exaggerated "the thralldom in which the journalist holds the bureaucracy in Vienna"(43)- after all Vienna was not Berlin. A graphic illustration of the self-assertiveness of the Viennese press can be seen from the numerous complaints levelled at the Ottoman correspondent of the Neue Freie Press-"a very troublesome person"(44), but the government's attempts to have him recalled from Constantinople met with a curt refusal. The Literarisches Bureau always had to reckon with the fact that the newspaper would not necessarily 'play ball' just to please the government. Then again the Catholic press often proved to be a thorn in Aehrenthal's side by roundly chastizing him for his

failure to act decisively against "the hair-raising atrocities being perpetrated by the Turks on the Catholic tribes of northern Albania." (45) Aehrenthal was also to suffer acute personal grief at the hands of *Die Zeit* when the Austro-Hungarian made the grand faux pas of ending the subsidy to that paper in 1909. Having quarrelled with the German ambassador to Vienna, Tschirschky, the paper never ceased to attack him until the day he died in February 1912. (46)

However, in spite of facts like these the Foreign Office remained convinced that the Austrian press was uniformly bad with no redeeming features- or as Crowe one of Germany's implacable foes put it:

...of all press bureaus, those at Vienna and Berlin are the vilest. Those who deliberately work them are the vilest people imaginable and the direct and indirect effect for which they are responsible constitute not only the most shameful, but also the most dangerous feature of modern foreign politics. However, there is no hope of any alteration in this. (47)

-A more damning indictment would be hard put to imagine! However, while the British King Edward VII periodically vented his spleen at the personal attacks on him in the Austrian press and Grey quickly moved to protest, for most of the time the Foreign Office maintained a silence-discreet or otherwise.

The only Austrian paper that the Foreign Office tended to put any value on at all was the semi-official *Fremdenblatt*. (48) With a circulation of some 15-20,000 this paper was read by influential sections of Austro-Hungarian aristocratic and upper middle-class society. Its articles were generally taken as a fairly accurate gauge of the direction of Austrian government policy both for the present and the future. As far as the popular press was concerned the *Neue Freie Presse* was without doubt the leader here- "read by practically everyone" in Cartwright's words. (49) Its circulation was somewhere in the region of 60,000. The paper was by no means hostile to Britain sans qualification and, indeed, the French ambassador was convinced that "it was in British pay." (50) Unlike the majority of the European press it took a distinctly sympathetic view vis-à-vis Britain's problems with the Boers in South Africa.

The paper also gave additional offence to the Monarchy's German ally by declaring that it understood perfectly the reasons for the Anglo-French agreement of 1904.(51) Subsequently, however, in 1905 the paper was effectively 'to blot its copybook', as far as the Foreign Office was concerned, by a particularly caustic attack on Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary. Henceforth, it was almost casually dismissed as being nothing less than "a German paper..edited under German influence."(52) and then further damned- with more than a little hint of anti-semitism- of "being the leading journalistic representative of Jewish interests on the Continent."(53) But then, in the opinion of most of the staff at the British embassy in Vienna, almost the entire Austrian press with the notable exception of the openly anti-semitic Reichspost was "in the hands of the Jews."(54) Regrettably this sentiment was commonplace and endorsed by figures as diverse as Steed of The Times and the Heir-Apparent, Franz Ferdinand. The Hungarian press, of which the Budapest Pester Lloyd was the most prominent example had comparatively little to say about foreign affairs and was largely focused on internal domestic problems such as the conflict with the nationalities. All that really can be said is that the press in Hungary was generally supportive of the German alliance- "our shield and buckler against the Slavs", as Tisza graphically put it (vide the Introduction) and The Triple Alliance. In the eyes of the Magyar élite the demon par excellence was Russia- particularly after 1848-9 when the Tsar had helped to crush their revolution.(55)

Wickham Steed, The Times correspondent in Vienna since 1905 was decidedly pro-Habsburg at this juncture, in spite of the fact that Mensdorff was inclined to dismiss him as being "all talk"(grosser Schwätzer).(56) Somewhat strangely in view of later developments, the Austrian Foreign Ministry attempted to use Steed as a surrogate critic of Berlin which given his well-known antipathy to Prussia-Germany, the Ballhausplatz thought he might very well like this opportunity, but Steed declined, no doubt puzzled by Vienna's motives and *arrière-pensée*.(57) In May 1907 he was still very much persona grata with Aehrenthal since the latter saw fit to commend him for his "sympathetic and

balanced accounts of Austria-Hungary" in The Times.(58) Three months later in August Aehrenthal was particularly pleased to hear that Steed was lecturing the Balkan Committee on their need to mitigate their harsh criticism of Ottoman Turkey which was an essential element in the balance of power in the Balkans and a crucial ingredient in Aehrenthal's foreign policy.(59) However, Steed's attitude was soon to change dramatically, as has been seen. The crucial Wendepunkt in Steed's thinking came in the summer of 1907 when he followed Aehrenthal's diplomatic manoeuvring with increasing alarm and consternation.(60) Together with Goschen he came to see the Sandjak Railway Project as a Machiavellian plan, devised in Berlin, to test the strength of the recently concluded Anglo-Russian entente. Steed was also less than convinced by the Austrian Minister's protestations of innocence regarding Ferdinand of Bulgaria's unilateral declaration of independence from Turkey. Henceforth Steed was now to become one of the Monarchy's most trenchant critics and indeed the Ottoman Empire too, after Aehrenthal concluded peace with her in 1909 following the Bosnian annexation. Steed's change of mind was not matched *pari passu* by the Foreign Office, as he discovered when trying to gain support from Hardinge for the Christian Arabs in Syria whose demands for autonomy had been rejected by the Porte. The maintenance of the Ottoman Empire was still "a long-standing principle of British foreign policy"(61), Hardinge curtly reminded him. However, that being said, it seems that the Foreign Office was prepared to give Steed the benefit of the doubt-even against the advice of Cartwright.

The crucial reckoning with Aehrenthal-'the burning of the boats', so to speak occurred in June 1910(62), when Steed's somewhat tendentious tactic of declaring obscure articles in the Austrian press as being really indicative of semi-official

thinking, sparked off an extraordinary anti-Habsburg campaign in the British press. Aehrenthal was livid and instructed Mensdorff to tell Grey that Steed fully "merited a place of honour among mischief making journalists."(63) The Neue Freie Presse in fact retaliated by launching a ferocious personal attack on Steed (64), which the Foreign Office caustically dismissed even though Cartwright declared that the criticism was just since "Steed was for personal reasons very bitter against everything Austrian"

and grotesque exaggerated "the government's control over the press." (65) Cartwright was devastated when Crowe sharply rebuked him and even more when Tyrell 'rubbed salt into the wound' by declaring that Steed's revelation of the modus operandi of the Austrian Press Bureau "was quite justified and fair...I am sure he is right." (66) Cartwright refused to accept the rebuke and responded by saying:

The apostle of the South Slavs..is a fanatic against Turkey and an enthusiast for the Serbs. He dreams of nothing less than a great uprising of all the Southern Slavs and a final burst up of Austria-Hungary." (67)

Steed was now definitely persona non grata in Vienna and in March 1911 Mensdorff sought Rosebery's help in trying to persuade The Times's proprietor, Lord Northcliffe, to recall him. (68) To Mensdorff's dismay Northcliffe was by no means amenable to the suggestion- in fact demurring by saying that the problem was "one of finding him another job." (69) However, since the forbearance of the Ballhausplatz had now reached breaking point, the Viennese government refused to relent and finally in 1913 Steed was removed. To the added dismay of the Austrians Steed was then appointed foreign editor of The Times, a more than suitable position to seek his revenge.

While there can be little doubt that Steed was the pre-eminent journalist of his time as far as Austria-Hungary was concerned, there was another commentator of note in E.J. Dillon who wrote on Austrian affairs for the Daily Telegraph. To begin with Dillon was very pro-Russian (70) but after a visit to Vienna in December 1908 he was strongly impressed by Aehrenthal and disenchanted by Izvolsky. (71) By the autumn of the following year (1909) Dillon was writing a highly appreciative article about the Austrian Foreign Minister in the monthly Contemporary Review under the title 'Count Aehrenthal and his unappreciative countrymen.' Basically, he argued that in Aehrenthal Austria-Hungary possessed a statesman of European reknown but like a prophet "scarcely recognized in his own country." (72) It was a standing shame that he had not received the credit and praise that was his due, especially over the Bosnian affair.

Interestingly, Aehrenthal appears to have given Dillon a personal interview in September in which the contentious subject of the meeting with Izvolsky at Buchlau was discussed (73), giving rise

to the notorious 'Vox alterae partis' reply to the Russian Foreign Minister's 'Vox et praeterea nihil' article in the Fortnightly Review.(74) Aehrenthal was obviously pleased that at the height of the furor over Bosnia and in marked contrast to Steed this particular English journalist could take his side and effectively cast doubts on Izvolsky's version of events at Buchlau. Aehrenthal was subsequently to follow Dillon's work with considerable interest. Not surprisingly, Dillon's article about what happened at Buchlau did not go down well with the Foreign Office especially as Hardinge was already *parti pris*, having declared that he found Izvolsky's account "full of interest".(75) As far as Hardinge was concerned Dillon had "gone completely over to the Austrians" and concluded with the damning indictment that "he is a most unreliable scoundrel."(76)

On the Austrian side was the intriguing figure of Professor Vambery—a *nom connu* in the affairs of the Middle East and the author of *Hungary in the Story of the Nations* series. While lecturing at the University of Vienna until his death in 1911 he was extremely adept at explaining British policy in the Middle East to the Austro-Hungarian public, contributing articles to both the British and Austrian press. The epithet 'intriguing' is well merited since all the time he was lecturing at the university he was also in the pay of the British secret service. The Anglo-Russian entente of 1907 quite stunned him and in the ensuing flak over Bosnia in 1908-9 he found himself in the crossfire between Vienna and London. For the remaining two years of his life he was to live in comparative obscurity.

Of greater consequence was the Austrian historian and publicist, Heinrich Friedjung who first came to prominence in the eyes of the British public and press with a highly tendentious article regarding Edward VII's visit to Ischl in 1908.(78) Since Cartwright had depicted Friedjung as being a great personal friend of the Austrian Foreign Minister, Grey sought a *démenti* and apology from Aehrenthal himself without, however, any real success. In fact by then Aehrenthal and Friedjung were at daggers drawn— with Friedjung actively conspiring with the German embassy against him(80). Quite possibly Friedjung was involved in the Cartwright interview affair when the British ambassador vented his wrath on Germany—

he certainly denounced Cartwright in the Austrian press in no uncertain terms.(81)

With the actual outbreak of war between Britain and Austria-Hungary in August 1914 a highly significant role was to be played by one particular pressure group- namely the Intelligence Bureau of the Department of Information. Headed by Lord Gleichen, important members of the Bureau such as J. W. Headlam, the Leper brothers and Sir Lewis B. Namier were critical of the Habsburg government and sympathetic to the cause of its subject nationalities. This was especially the case with Namier who worked for the East European Department of the Foreign Office. A descendent of Jewish landowners from Galicia, Namier not only wanted to see the resurrection of an independent Polish state he was also a great supporter of the Czechs. In two pamphlets, later published in 1917, Namier argued that it was very much in the Allies' interest to support the cause of Czech independence since this would deprive 'the German war-machine' of a large number of men. Moreover, as far as Namier was concerned the Habsburg Empire deserved destruction because it had compelled the Czechs and other Slavs to fight what was after all their ethnic kinsfolk in Serbia and Russia.(82) In May 1915 Namier published an important memorandum for the government of which the salient points were the following: 1. The Austrian Germans could not and would not break their alliance with Germany. 2. The Magyars would never concede equal national rights to their nationalities. 3. The Czechs would never surrender their demands for a Bohemian state on par with that of the Magyars. 4. The Roumanians and the Yugoslavs would not tolerate indefinite inclusion within the Empire all the while national states of their own existed outside it. And, finally, 5. Autonomy was no longer a valid option since the war had fanned the flames of nationalism.

Namier was well aware that there were in Britain people who would by no means favour the disruption of the Monarchy since it was likely to have the double negative effect of leading to the absorption of the Austro-Germans within the German Reich and the diffusion of Russian influence throughout the Balkans. Namier was optimistic enough to believe that these two factors would cancel one another out and that the creation of national states

would act as an effective barrier to either German or Russian designs on the Mediterranean. Namier was particularly anxious to forestall any 'misguided' attempts that might be made to try and detach Austria-Hungary from her ally since, all the while the Dualist system remained intact, the Habsburgs needed the German alliance.

Interestingly, Namier's report evoked mixed feelings in the Foreign Office with R. Graham considering it "cogently argued" and "no danger" while Lancelot Oliphant objected to its "tendentiousness." In his view Namier had gone way beyond his remit and instead of just furnishing information had offered a distinct political approach.* Quite clearly, there were elements within the Foreign Office who- understandably- resented the intake of "so-called experts" like Namier, fearing that they were in danger of being side-lined by those possessing superior knowledge through background and/or education.

However, in the highest circles of government Robert Seton-Watson's journal *New Europe* was particularly valued for its competent and detailed information stemming from the various émigré underground movements such as the Czech Mafia and the War Office Daily Review of the Foreign Press. Seton-Watson was initially selected for a mission to Russia- which was construed by Steed as a blatant attempt to remove him from the scene by pro-Habsburg elements who had failed to silence him by having him drafted into the R.A.M.C. as a private- but in April 1917 he was to be attached to the Information Department of the War Cabinet. This per se was a significant pointer to the influence his views now held in government circles.

The entire *raison d'être* of *New Europe* lay simply in its express goal of influencing both government and public in the need to make the dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire a definite war aim. Founded in October 1916, under the prompting of his friend, Thomas Masaryk and financed largely by himself, the journal was focused, initially, upon the aim of Czech independence rather than just autonomy. According to Steed, Seton-Watson had been mesmerized by the personality of the Czech leader at the time of the Friedjung trial in 1908 when Masaryk had

*FO. 371/2862, No, 97435.

successfully defended the leaders of the Serbo-Croatian coalition against the charge of treason, and he had only been brought to a critical appraisal of the problem of Bohemia within the Empire only by Masaryk's personal magnetism. (Seton-Watson's cause celebre had been, of course, the Southern Slavs not the Northern, as has been seen in Chapter 111. Masaryk had indicated to Seton-Watson as early as April 1915 that it was absolutely indispensable "to have a critical weekly to lead the public opinion and above all the government and the staff"(83) but it was not until the following April(1916) that he felt able to sketch out the journal's future development:

Groups of competent persons are now being formed in the principal Allied countries; these groups will endeavour to keep in close touch with each other so that their influence upon the public opinion and, through public opinion, their pressure upon the governments of their respective countries may be concordant and simultaneous.(84)

New Europe was unquestionably unique in that it set out to convince the British public and government alike that 'Austria delenda est!' -Austria-Hungary must be destroyed. Most of the articles were penned by Seton-Watson and Steed but it also garnered support from such diverse figures as Arthur Evans, the editor of the Observer, H.M. Hyndman, the leader of the Marxist Social-Democratic Federation, the explorer, Sir Francis Younghusband, the anthropologist, Sir James Frazer and the historians, Ramsey Muir, Holland Rose, Alison Phillips and Sir Paul Vinogradov who acted as 'collaborators' along with several M.P.s. (being an international magazine it also had contributions from such prominent literary figures as Salvador de Madariaga from Spain.)(85)

Although influential personalities like G.P. Gooch, the historian and C. P. Scott, the editor of the Manchester Guardian, sympathized with the nationalities of the Empire they still valued the Habsburgs as 'a civilizing force' and consequently refused to be involved in Steed and Seton-Watson's anti-Austrian campaign. However, that being said, they were undoubtedly impressed by the forcefulness of their arguments which had already been advanced in the pages of the Round Table and Spectator- albeit anonymously.(in the case of Seton-Watson under the pseudonym 'Scotus Viator', as has been seen.)(86) Other important figures, however, like Sir Valentine Chirol of The Times, the historian G.M. Trevelyan and the famous novelist H.G.

Wells were quickly won round to Seton-Watson's view that the best way to defeat Germany's 'Drang nach Osten' was to create a 'cordon sanitaire' of new states in the Danubian basin which- il va sans dire- naturally implied the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. These 'noms connus' were particularly impressed by Seton-Watson's claim that to this end the smaller nationalities were Britain's natural and ideal allies.(87)

Thanks to Steed's position at The Times they were given every opportunity to support Seton-Watson's arguments in the paper's columns.(88)

Seton-Watson and Steed were to win over an especially prominent person for their cause- that of Lord Cromer, the former proconsul in Egypt and a man with many influential contacts in government circles. Initially, Cromer had felt that "an extreme predominance on the part of the Slavs was only one degree better than pan-Germanism"(89) but their arguments had finally convinced him that while "this bundle of disconnected national units had a certain recuperative power"(i.e. Austria)(90) This strength had only been operative in the past when the maintenance of the 'Balance of Power' had been regarded as "the cornerstone of European policy by all statesmen."(91) Now times had changed and "this principle had to be applied in a very different spirit" since the "fire of nationalism" had broken out and could not be quenched. "Triallism" which once "would have satisfied", as Seton-Watson had believed, "was no longer enough." (92) In an article for the Quarterly Review in October 1915 Cromer conceded that the creation of an independent South Slav state automatically implied the creation of its northern equivalent- i.e. that of the Czechs and the effective "cessation of the HABSBURG Empire."(93) Cromer admitted that he had considerable reservations on that seemingly logical dénouement but nevertheless declared:

The day of retribution for Austria seems to be at hand. The ultimate survival of Austria as a separate political entity is more than doubtful, but if she is to survive at all, she will certainly have to make a radical change in the principles of government which under political and military influences, have so far guided her action.(94)

Much to Seton-Watson and Steed's delight Lord Cromer was

to accept the presidency of the Serbian Society which they founded in August 1916, saying:

Not only do I sympathize with the Southern Slavs, but my personal opinion is, that it is in the interests of the whole of Europe that a strong Southern Slav state should be created as a barrier against Teutonic aggression.(95)

Under his aegis, the Serbian Society came to distribute over 20.000 copies of its prospectus to all the major newspapers on September 27th which duly impressed the government. In fact, the Society adequately reflected elements of Foreign Office thinking when it roundly declared:

How many people in the British Empire understood, in July 1914 that the Austro-German attack upon Serbia was directed in reality at the British Empire? How many perceived that it was designed, by securing the Austro-German road to the East, to undermine our position in Egypt and India? Very few, (96)

In April 1915 Steed, Seton-Watson and Lord Cromer were to be scandalized by the signing of the Treaty of London in which in return for Italy's support in the war, Britain and France agreed to Italy's acquisition of large swathes of Austro-Hungarian territory, including Istria and North Dalmatia, inhabited mainly by South Slavs and not just the Italian speaking areas of Trieste and the Trentino. While the negotiations were still under way they jointly tried to mobilize public opinion against these concessions. Not only Seton-Watson but also the biographer of Garibaldi, G.M. Trevelyan and R. Muir wrote articles for the Italian Socialist daily, *Unità*, which, while supporting the Italian claim to Trieste and the Trentino, also demanded the creation of an independent Yugoslav state comprising with Serbia all the territory of the Monarchy inhabited by the South Slavs(97) On April 23rd 3 days before the actual signing of the treaty Seton-Watson made a last minute attempt to prevent what he regarded as a "flagrant violation of the principle of nationality for which the Allies were ostensibly fighting"(98) in a letter to *The Times*. The letter met with the approval of "some very high people in the Foreign Office", particularly Arthur Nicolson, who saw clearly, natural justice aside, the problem of Italian insistence of no union between Croatia and Serbia, for "any attempt by Italy to incorporate Austria's Slavs would be bitterly opposed by them and we will have a Southern Slav question with Italy in place of Austria."(99) The dilemma between idealistic principles and 'the necessity of Realpolitik' can be seen in Sir George Clark's remark "unless Italy comes in

at once and turns the scale decisively against Austria and Germany, Grey, Delcassé and Sazonov will deserve to be hanged." (100)

When the British ambassador to Italy Rodd strongly hinted that Seton-Watson's letter "had offended Italian susceptibilities The Times dropped the issue.(101) In vain Seton-Watson tried a direct approach to Grey himself but Grey was adamant that the military both in Britain and France had declared that Italy's entry in the war would decide the issue. Quite clearly Grey's overriding aim was the defeat of the Central Powers and the principle of nationality per se was an expendable optional extra. Grey's attitude was in fact never one of pro-Slav or pro-Roumanian or any other nationality but rather one of anti-German and by extension anti-Habsburg too. This can be seen too from the private conversations that the Russian ambassador to London, Count Benckendorff had had with ministers and influential conservatives in September 1914 when he discerned the British government's tacit acceptance of the severing from Austria of her Polish and Ukrainian provinces as well as the Bukovina, as has been seen in Part 1.

In a further and more determined attempt to counteract what Frano Supilo and other South Slav statesmen saw as an obvious return to the world of Machiavellian Realpolitik a Yugoslav Committee was founded in May 1915, again with the strong support of Steed, Seton-Watson and Cromer, A letter was drafted "to the British Nation and Parliament" vis-à-vis "the aspirations of the Southern Slavs", in which they said that "Serbs Croats and Slovenes prayed for an Entente victory and the salvation of the Yugoslav nation." (102) Indeed even Pasić, the Serbian premier seemed willing to co-operate in the pursuance of the wider Yugoslav ideal. Again the usual ambivalence was apparent in Sir George's reply that the memorandum met "with the full sympathy of the Foreign Office but the warning had to be conveyed that none of us can win the war without some bitter sacrifices." (103)

Fearful of Grey's only too obvious willingness to appease the Italians for the traditional *raison d'état* the Yugoslav Committee employed all sorts of propaganda to get their demands.

across, including the staging of a sculpture exhibition by one of their members, Ivan Meštrović, in London which was opened by Lord Robert Cecil. Simultaneously, Seton-Watson pressed the Foreign Office to utilize the Committee for intelligence purposes(104) but the advice of their "new counsellors" was regarded sceptically by the traditionally minded Foreign Office staff. French diplomatic pressure was to prove more effective: since Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, had seen the Yugoslav delegation, Lord Crewe of the Foreign Office agreed to do the same on July 2nd (1915). Crewe assured the South Slavs of "the goodwill of the British government" but added the rider that "in European history no people had been liberated entirely in one single war and that all had to pass through several stages of unity."(105)

However, this "goodwill" precluded any official recognition of a South Slav state, comprising all the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes of the Habsburg Monarchy in deference to the Italians with their designs on the eastern shore of the Adriatic which had once belonged to the Venetian Republic. The Italians had viewed all Seton-Watson and Steed's efforts on behalf of the South Slavs with growing apprehension and their pressure on the government had ensured that the Yugoslav Committee, which emphatically denounced the Italian claims, were not allowed to publish their memoranda. Steed and Lord Cromer, as president of the Serbian Society, also felt the full wrath of the Italian nationalist press which suggested that the Society was in the hands of Yugoslavs in the pay of the Monarchy in order to foment divisions amongst the Allies. While the Foreign Office failed to offer both the Society and the Yugoslav Committee any effective support, the Italians, nevertheless, looked at the seeming 'detachment' - if not 'désintéressement' - of the British government with increasing suspicion. It was in vain that the British Ambassador, Rodd in Rome wrote to Grey in November 1916:

They do not realize that even the chairmanship of Lord Cromer and active support of The Times do not necessarily imply that the Serbian Society is going to control the policy of his Majesty's Government.(106)

Again, the implicit ambivalence of phrases like "not

necessarily" and "is going to " would hardly have reassured the Italians and given the importance ascribed to The Times by the government and the powerful influence of Lord Cromer, showed that even Grey, malgre lui, was not completely immune to their arguments- even if Realpolitik was the ultimate dictator of his actions. Indeed, it cannot be emphasized strongly enough that the perceived need to gain Italy's intervention in the war and keep her support, whatever territorial concessions that Austria-Hungary might be induced to make to her nominal ally in the Triple Alliance- was always Grey's concern par excellence. From the beginning of the war Grey's aim had been to enclose both Germany and Austria within a ring of states allied to the Entente and, indeed, before that, as has been argued in the Introduction, at the beginning of the thesis.(107) The British government had high hopes of creating a Balkan bloc consisting of Bulgaria, Roumania, and Greece in support of Serbia's struggle against Austria-Hungary, and Grey was convinced that Italian intervention would also encourage Roumania to intervene, given the latter's well-known designs on Transylvania.(108)

In fact, even before the negotiations with Italy had taken place, Grey had promised his support for Roumanian "territorial claims"(109) which, as Steed was to indicate:

This signs the death-warrant of Hungary, begins the necessary partition of Austria and foreshadows the reconstruction of Europe on the basis of ethnically complete states.(110)

Through the medium of Seton-Watson, Thomas Masaryk, who was by now in the autumn of 1914 advocating complete independence and not just autonomy for the Czechs and Slovaks, was able to establish contacts with the Foreign Office and as a result of his conversations with Sir George Clerk prepared his famous memorandum: 'Independent Bohemia.'(111) The memorandum argued that Austria had always been an artificial state but had now lost whatever *raison d'être* it might once have had. He drew a close comparison with the cause of the Yugoslavs, Seton-Watson's cause célèbre, by stressing the viability of a future Czecho-Slovak state and its importance for the creation of a Slavic barrier, together with Serbia-Croatia, in containing Germany's plans "to colonize the Balkans and Asia Minor,"(112) According to Bunsen, Masaryk was also serious in arguing that the new North Slav

state should be linked with the South Slav state by a strip of territory running north to south along the present western border of Hungary.(113)

Through the auspices of Seton-Watson again, Masaryk was emboldened to accept the post of lecturer at King's College London which gave him a valuable propaganda platform. In his inaugural lecture entitled 'The Problem of Small Nations in the European Crisis' Masaryk appealed directly to the British public for support in the creation of a series of slavonic states to act as an effective cordon sanitaire to contain Germany in East-Central Europe.(114)

Seton-Watson's influence was such as to also enable both Masaryk and the Serbian Premier Pasić to have a valuable input to a study of war aims, prepared for the War Committee of the Cabinet, undertaken by W. Tyrrell and Robert Paget under the aegis of the Foreign Office in August 1916. Both men concluded that:

Austria proper will never again be able to shake herself free from Germany and it would be wise to regard her mostly as a part of the German Empire; consequently, she should be robbed of as much territory as possible.(115)

The Foreign Office were evidently particularly struck by Tyrrell's and Paget's conversations with Masaryk and Pasić to the effect that any new Slav states so created would look to Britain and France with their democratic ideals rather than semi-autocratic Russia, racial affinities notwithstanding, as many elements feared. Thus Tyrrell and Paget strongly urged:

There seems little doubt that in accordance with the principle of giving free play to nationalities, the Dual Monarchy, which in its present composition is a negation of that principle, should be broken up.(116)

Hardinge found it "an interesting report" although "it required a great deal of digestion" while Grey seconded Hardinge's conclusions by saying he found it "very ably done."(117)

Some three weeks late on August 31st, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir William Robertson, submitted his memorandum, and given the commitments to Italy and Roumania, which had just signed the Treaty of Bucharest, it was quite

clear that the intention was to break up Austria-Hungary.

(Interestingly, though, Robertson himself said that he would have preferred to preserve the Monarchy as "a barrier against Pan-Slavism"- an effective code-word for potential Russian expansionism.)

By the turn of the year 1916/17 the scheme of 'the liberation of the nationalities' by the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, as advocated by New Europe had become a serious factor in the higher counsels of the government as a whole, with Lloyd George who had replaced Asquith as head of a Coalition government in November 1916, arguing that:

Germany is formidable only as long as she can command an unbroken Austria but if Austria is broken, Germany will be broken too.(118)

Quite cleverly, too, Cecil persuaded his colleagues to gain the sympathy of America after Woodrow Wilson's appeal in December 1916 for "the belligerents' to state their terms" that the Allies should declare that "above all a settlement on national lines would be essential in S.Eastern Europe..which must include the liberation of Slav peoples from German domination."(119)

In this respect the Allied Note of January 10th, formulated at an Anglo-French-Italian conference in Paris, was to mark a landmark in the history of the war since the so-called "liberation passage "(120) named not just Roumanians, Italians and Slavs (the term 'Yugoslavs' being unacceptable to the Italians) but also specifically "Czechoslovaks" for the first time. Cecil had been persuaded to include the reference which had not been in the first draft of the war aims' declaration thanks to the influence of Philippe Berthelot, the Director in the French Foreign Ministry, under the pressure of Edvard Beneš, the director of the Czechoslovak National Committee based in the French capital.(121)

Although it might be argued that until now Britain and the Allied Powers had not said the final word as far as the fate of Austria-Hungary was concerned they had now jointly, in Philippe Berthelot's words "committed themselves and given hostages to the future."(122)

Indeed there could be now little doubt that were the Allies to win the war the very existence of the Monarchy would be at stake, and this is exactly how the Entente Note of January 10th was understood. The Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister Count Czernin immediately lodged a protest in Washington lambasting the British and Allied governments for aiming no less at "the annihilation and spoliation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy" and Count Wedel, the new German ambassador in Vienna reported that Austrian indignation was particularly directed against England, which was blamed for the continuation of the war:

The last beau geste of a slumbering anglomania has been swept away, because England is now recognized as the true representative of the will for war and the English statesmen are made responsible for the inclusion of the unholy plan for partition.(123)

Reading this despatch the Kaiser commented laconically:

Lloyd George and Briand have done good work for us. They have become the unifiers of Mitteleuropa. We might have hired them to do it.(124)

Certainly the new Emperor Karl's hopes for a negotiated compromise peace to end the war were dealt a severe blow while the Germans could, ironically, take comfort from the fact that it bound the Monarchy closer to them- *faute de mieux*. In Vienna indignation knew no bounds. Apparently then, a weakened Germany was to be allowed to exist- shorn of Alsace-Lorraine and her Polish province- while the Danubian Monarchy was to be erased from the map. The continuing belief in 'Old Austrian' circles that the Habsburg Empire had been represented as the victim of the alliance with Germany, a victim whom Britain *inter alios* had every interest in protecting from the greed and ambition of covetous neighbours, now seemed completely illusory.

Indeed, the Allied declaration was to have appalling consequences since it provided the German militarists with powerful arguments for persuading Austria to agree to a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. Both Karl, who succeeded to the throne after Franz Joseph's death in November 1916 and Count Czernin, the Foreign Minister, had been strongly opposed to this new strategy but the Germans' insistence and the intransigent attitude of the Allies gave them very little choice. (125)

"we must once more do something..to do nothing is always worse", Czernin told Joseph Redlich when discussing the decision. (126) This "something" was certainly not war with America, which unrestricted warfare involving attacks on neutral shipping, seriously threatened. On January 22nd President Wilson had delivered his famous 'Peace Without Victory' speech which, while endorsing the principle of nationality, only mentioned Poland by name, thus giving Czernin room for manoeuvre. Wilson was by no means in favour of either British or French war aims and through the intermediary of the Austro-Hungarian ambassador-designate Count Adam Tarnowski, who arrived in Washington on the very day of the rupture of diplomatic relations between the U.S.A. and Germany, the President attempted, on the advice of Colonel House "to use Austria for peace" by reaching out to Germany through her. Tarnowski had been well received by Robert Lansing, the American Secretary of State and Czernin responded immediately saying that he accepted the proposal of peace negotiations on that very basis of 'peace Without Victory' and he sincerely hoped that the American President would use his influence with Britain and France to induce them to do the same.(127)

The Americans replied immediately and on February 8th the ambassador in London was told that the President wanted to keep official channels with Austria open but the chief obstacle was: the threat apparently contained in the peace terms recently stated by the Entente allies that in case they succeeded they would insist upon a virtual dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.(128)

The programme advocated by New Europe was known in America, being an international journal, and the official policy of the Allies seemed to bear an uncanny resemblance to it.

Lloyd George, whose reputation for deviousness was celebrated, was more than a little disingenuous when he replied

"we have no policy of sheer dismemberment, but we must stand by the nationals of our allies such as the Roumanians, the Slavs, the Serbians and the Italians. Their just demands must be met by the principle of nationality.(129)

When he added that "the Emperor may keep Hungary and Bohemia" that was not really saying a great deal, It was true

that the Czechoslovaks were not mentioned this time and indeed Bohemia's continuing inclusion in the Empire was specifically mentioned, but the tone of his conversation with Ambassador Page on February 10th is clearly one of virtual dismemberment, if all the official desiderata are taken into account. If slightly less demanding than the Allied Note of January 10th, nevertheless the peoples referred to above "were to be freed from Austrian control"(130) and how far this is envisaged is shown by Lloyd George's refusal to even guarantee the Monarchy's continuing access to the sea at Fiume and Trieste, nor for that matter to give an assurance for the survival of the rump empire, when specifically asked for it.

Clearly, Lloyd George did not want to give the impression that the Note of January 10th was not a serious programme but a kind of 'opening gambit.' But possibly and more importantly, after the peace without victory speech, he wished to emphasize that the Allies were not prepared to subordinate their war aims to the desires of an American President. The intriguing question, however, remains as to why did Lloyd George consent to Wilson's proposal in the first place? Was it because he believed that there was no chance of any *détente* between Germany and the U.S.A. in any case, whether through Austria or not? Be that as it may, the British had a formidable ace up their sleeves in the notorious 'Zimmermann Telegram' promising both Mexico and Japan territorial rewards if they joined in an attack on America. On the 23rd of February the deciphered telegram was despatched to Washington and the subsequent furore in the U.S.A. effectively put paid to any rapprochement between America and Germany.

Another significant pressure group was that of the former proconsul in South Africa, Lord Milner, who by the sheer force of his personality had succeeded in assembling around himself a group of aspiring intellectuals- the so-called 'Kindergarten' and even having some of them co-opted into the personal Secretariat in Lloyd George's Garden Suburb.(131) His influence was tremendous, both within and outside of the Cabinet. Among them were Leopold Amery- who with the rank of Under-Secretary of State was to direct a 'Far Eastern Committee'- the historian Lionel Curtis, now editor of the Round Table and journalists

such as Philip Kerr. The Round Tablers tried to promote their idea of a "New Imperialism" which would in effect recast the British Empire into some of Federal Union and although before the war they were anything but concerned with "the extraordinary Austro-Hungarian Empire" which was held together "by one of the most remarkable and delicate systems of checks and balances the world has ever seen"(132) they had distinct sympathies with what they regarded as a comparable undertaking in Europe, which might even serve as a model. Milner accepted Steed and Seton-Watson's analysis that the essence of the Dualist System was to ensure the continuing dominance of the German and Magyar élites, but, unlike them, he continued to hope for some Tripartite solution capable of conciliating the Slavs, particularly the South Slavs. With the publication of Franz Naumann's work *Mitteleuropa* in 1916 Milner and the young intellectuals around him thought it absolutely essential to counter the plans for a vast Central European Customs Union, originally envisaged by the Austrian statesman Prince Schwarzenberg in the early 19th century, but were now designed to erect a German dictatorship over Europe: "since this would represent nothing less than the triumph of the Prussian theory of international relations against that of the Commonwealth." Consequently, while Milner believed that "the liberation of the non-German peoples from the political and military control of Berlin" enabling them "to settle their own future for themselves" was a sine qua non of any Allied peace terms he would rather liked to have preserved the Habsburg Monarchy as a continental equivalent of a federalized British Imperial Union- hence the term 'New Imperialists.' Milner liked the idea of the Monarchy's preservation not only for the possibility of a separate peace, detaching her from Germany, but also as a bulwark against further German aggression in the future. The ascendancy to the throne of the half Bourbon Imperial family- Karl and Zita- had the Latin touch which the Round Table had already noted with Franz Ferdinand of Habsburg-Lorraine-Este-which might herald a distinctly anti-Teutonic policy for the post war period.

Since Milner's ideas on peace in general and on Austria-Hungary in particular differed from the anti-Central Powers official line, no prominent British paper could be induced to

publish them.(133)

Milner's ideas were, therefore, quite at variance with those of Steed and Seton-Watson but supported in some parliamentary quarters. The analogy of Habsburg and British imperial constitutional problems had an obvious affinity with the question of Irish dissension. Thus, the Conservative M.P. James F. Hope, for one, urged Milner to "build on the basis of Federalism, not Dualism" and "By Dualism" he went on "I mean independent or overlapping Parliaments in the same realm, and wherever this system has been tried, it has in different ways ended disastrously, e.g. Norway, Hungary, Croatia and Ireland itself."(134)

On the opposite side of the political spectrum, the Radical V. Arnold made a similar point, writing in the Cambridge Magazine:

The difficulties of the Habsburg Monarchy are similar to those of the British Empire and its aims consistent with our safety. Indeed the problems of the Habsburgs are comparable to British Imperial policy.(135)

In an interview which Milner gave to the American Sidney Low in March 1917 Milner said he was "in favour of trying to detach Germany's allies by offer, in due course, of moderate terms of peace" particularly vis-a-vis Austria and encouraged Low to publish this suggestion in the Atlantic Monthly(136) With the entry of America in the war in April 1917, Low went even further. In the magazine Nineteenth Century he elaborated on Milner's ideas on federal reconstruction instead of partition and dismemberment, adding to it a call for the U.S.A. to play a role in the remodelling of Europe with a 'League to Enforce Peace'- the embryo of the later League of Nations.(136) Low issued a stern warning against weakening Germany's chief ally rather than Germany herself for:

The break-up of Austria would make Prussianized Germany the only strong power between the Baltic and the Mediterranean. She would be free from contact with another great and partly Germanic state, which has indeed lately shown itself her subservient tool, but is nevertheless always her potential rival.(137)

Low, echoing Milner, argued that by granting Austria (as

well as Turkey and Bulgaria) "not easy conditions but conditions that would leave them some political cohesion" this "might serve as a stepping-stone towards the wider reforms we contemplate" for Germany would have little scope to incorporate into her *Mitte europa* an Austria

which continued to exist by the mercy of the Allies; and which would be under guarantee to them of good behaviour both in their external and their domestic relations.(138)

In such circumstances Austria-Hungary, together with her former enemy Serbia plus Roumania, could be built into a barrier against any further German *Drang nach Osten*. For Milner and his followers this programme was far more preferable than that of New Europe with its "sacred lamp of nationality" since in the partitioning of Austria one could not be sure of the feelings of the various nationalities, but it was highly unlikely that the Croats and Slovenes would welcome Serbian rule in exchange for Magyar domination. They might very well feel: 'Better the devil we know.' Unlike the supporters of New Europe Milner and company did not see any promising international future based on the doctrines of nationality and self-government. Moreover they were unconvinced that dismembering the Habsburg Empire was the best way of containing the German threat to the British Empire which was always their prime concern. On the contrary, they argued, the '*finis Austriae*' would almost certainly lead to the absorption of the Austro-Germans into the Reich which would more than compensate for the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and 2 million Poles. In fact Europe would then be faced with a solid block of 80 million Germans reaching almost to the Adriatic and, potentially, representing a greater threat to the European balance of power than the pre-war constellation.

The Milner group also made a point of arguing that since any post war settlement would not just redraw the map of Europe but govern too the future foreign policy of the Empire it was essential that the Dominions should be clear about what the Allies were actually fighting for and "any projected peace terms should be made the peace terms of the whole Empire." (139) Such was the pressure that an Imperial War Cabinet was established on March 22nd 1917 in which the 'Milnerites' succeeded in gaining a temporary forum for their views. Here too, the new Foreign Secretary Arthur J. Balfour gave a wide-ranging analysis of foreign policy.

(After the fall of Asquith's government at the end of 1916, Sir Edward Grey, who was widely blamed by Seton-Watson and Steed inter al. for the Serbian débâcle of December when both Serbia and Montenegro were overrun by Austro-German forces was replaced.)

While Balfour's ostensible aim was to show that Milner's ideas were not so different from that of the Foreign Office and government, this was clearly not the case. Naturally, Balfour said, he was at one with Milner when the latter argued that the greatest danger for Britain lay in Germany's strategic position which, were she able to preserve it, would provide her "with an unbroken avenue of influence from Berlin to Baghdad"(140) but how best to thwart it was another matter. In posing the rhetorical question: "What, by the terms of the Note sent to President Wilson, will be left of Austria?" the answer was clearly not very much. (That Austria was willing to consider an early- and even separate peace- had been intimated by the new Emperor Karl and the Sixtus letter affair seemed to confirm it.) (141)

After reviewing all the promises made by the previous government to Serbia, Italy, Russia and Roumania, Balfour was compelled to admit that he saw no solution to the difficulties and obstacles to a peace with Austria, and no hope of solving them unless the war were won. Only Balfour's Permanent Under-Secretary, Lord Hardinge, another former proconsul, was willing to sacrifice the interests of the smaller allies for the sake of the British Empire, arguing that "if a guarantee of the support of the Allies were given...Austria might well be satisfied with a federation of the four autonomous states of Austria, Hungary, Bohemia and Yugoslavia under personal sovereignty" which would "create a powerful barrier against the German Drang nach Osten." (142) However, any further discussion was effectively precluded by Lord Curzon when he abruptly informed the members of the Subcommittee of Territorial Desiderata, of which he was the chair, that Italy had unequivocally vetoed any proposal for a separate peace with Austria.

By the winter of 1916/17 when official discussions regarding the Monarchy were reaching their peak, those who favoured the goal of destruction and those who wanted to preserve her waged a fierce struggle against each other in order to gain the sympathy of public opinion and to convince the government and the Foreign

Office of the validity of their arguments.

The anti-Habsburg elements labelled their opponents as those "who advocate the detachment of the Habsburg Dominions from Germany." - in other words those who wanted a separate peace. In a speech in the House of Commons on May 14th one of the parliamentary supporters of New Europe, J. Annan Bryce surveyed what he termed "this strange company." (143) To begin with, he noted that there was a powerful body of financial opinion who looked upon any schemes of dismemberment with alarm since cosmopolitan finance had invested a large amount of money in the Monarchy as an integrated economic unit. Any partition would not just threaten but almost certainly overthrow the entire commercial and monetary system of the Danubian basin, something which New Europe did not seem to grasp. Financial institutions such as the Credit-Anstalt and the Wiener Bank would probably collapse, damaging the interests of the City of London. Bankers, financiers and industrialists like Hugh Bell, R. Holt and D.A. Moltenow who had opposed the war from the beginning came together in the weekly journal Commonsense, edited by F. Hirst, to warn the British public that any attempt to prolong the war for the sake of destroying the Monarchy would seriously damage British prosperity. By the summer of 1917 these supporters of a compromise peace, known as the "yellow circle", had attempted to contact certain financiers of the Central Powers in Switzerland, alarming the government to such an extent that the War Office sent a certain Mr. Kingham there to report on their activities. (144) Clearly, although the influence of the City was not decisive, it was nevertheless an important factor that the government had to take cognizance of when questions of war and peace were involved.

The fate of Austria-Hungary also concerned a number of people who had less direct power because of their birth and social status had considerable influence in official quarters. In this category came aristocrats and old Conservatives, as has been seen in the beginning of the chapter (VII). Typical amongst this class of society was Walpurga Paget, the wife of the former ambassador to Vienna, Augustus B. Paget, who had a marked sentimental attachment to the 'nice Austrians' and feared that a German victory would almost certainly 'prussianize' Austria,

and eventually even lead to her absorption by her stronger neighbour. According to Lady Paget the new Emperor was an intelligent man and would appreciate the implications of the situation and welcome a separate peace at the cost of concessions to Italy and the Balkan states. While the Monarchy would have to surrender non-German territory Lady Paget hoped that she might very well be compensated and in fact strengthened by becoming a centre of attraction for the catholic states of South Germany who were, historically, scarcely enamoured of a Germany under Prussian aegis. Indeed, it was even possible that the Credit-Anstalt and the Wiener Bank might be willing to aid the Allies in reversing the Bismarckian solution of the 'German Problem' in 1871. Her optimism was undoubtedly undaunting, when she even declared that Austria should be allowed to recover Silesia, seized by Prussia in the 1740's, as a guarantee of Allied *bonne foi* in a separate peace.(145)

The significance of the raising of such unrealistic possibilities (which were to some extent instilled in official minds(146)) can only be explained by the overwhelming desire to see the British Empire freed from any future threat from Germany. This type of thinking affected both British Conservatives and Royalists as much as a majority of British Liberal but while the latter appealed primarily to British self-interest, the Austrophile aristocracy hoped to save the House of Habsburg *per se* through the methods of the Congress of Vienna. Such conceptions were certainly historically dated and while Lady Paget could instil her pro-Habsburg sentiments at the highest level there was no chance of their becoming official policy. The personal social domain was one thing but the public arena was another and here aristocratic personages could be readily denounced by New Europe, for example, as overt or closet reactionaries:

shortsighted ultra-montanes who in their ignorance regard the decadent and corrupt Catholicism of Austria and Hungary as a bulwark of the Universal Church..the black reactionaries who still linger in a few corners in Rome and Paris, dreaming of the restoration..of some degenerate Bourbon dynast in France or Spain.(147)

This early hint at the Carlist pretenders was not based on any actual knowledge of the secret manoeuvrings of Prince Sixtus,

the brother of the Empress Zita, serving in the Belgian army and her husband the Emperor Karl, but it was certainly indicative of how well New Europe gauged its existing and potential enemies. As far as the position of the Vatican itself was concerned the Curia, Seton-Watson argued, was by no means the enemy of the Entente powers since Benedict XV's appeal for 'a just peace' had more in common with the aims of the Allies than that of Germany with her Mitteleuropa plans. Indeed, A. Bryce even went so far as to say that the Vatican was actually more concerned with saving the catholic nationalities of the Empire than the Monarchy as such.(148) This was almost certainly wishful thinking since while the Pope studiously avoided siding with the Habsburgs, at least openly, nevertheless, he obviously wished to preserve an empire which had paid all due deference to the Papacy in the past. (After all, one of the historic titles of the House of Habsburg was 'Apostolic King of Hungary'.) The Pope's idea of a just peace was a modified status quo ante in which Austria-Hungary would continue to play an important role, and consequently, Allied diplomats were enjoined to follow a policy of 'Ménagez l'Autriche.' (149) Benedict was by no means a tool of the Central Powers, as Steed suspected, as his cautious attitude to the peace offer of these states in 1916 demonstrated. On the other hand the Vatican's concern for the fate of the nationalities only intensified after a compromise peace proved impossible. Throughout the war Papal pronouncements remained remarkably guarded, but this was merely a reflection of the Catholic Church's inability to influence events even if it wanted to.(En passant, it might be mentioned that Italy had insisted that the Vatican have no say in the final peace settlement.)

Steed's suspicion of catholic influences even extended to the distinguished Catholic writers G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc and quite misplaced since both writers took an openly anti-Austria stand, and, in any case, their opinions had a limited impact on the public mind. Potential pro-Habsburg feelings of some Catholics in the middle and lower echelons of the Foreign Office such as Theo. Russel, Drummond and Gregory gave him more worry; so much so that he wrote to them about his conversations with Cardinal de Cabrière, a leader of the French Church, to convince them that the Vatican was was preeminently

concerned with the fate of the nationalities not Austria. Apparently, to little effect- for a year later , the Austrophobes were still complaining about the so-called 'Vaticanists' implanted in the diplomatic service and other government departments, who were trying to embroil Britain in pourparlers with Vienna.(149)

While the conservative and aristocratic elements tended to speak sotto voce behind the scenes in defence of the Monarchy. there was another important group of dissenters from official government foreign policy- the Radicals, Liberal opposers of the Coalition government that were often denounced as "trouble makers" or "amiable pacifists." These Radicals were quite strident in demanding a negotiated peace with Germany and Austria, believing that they were willing to restore the status quo ante but the main obstacle was the war aims of the Allied powers, especially as they threatened the integrity of the Habsburg Empire. This is perhaps, then, one of the most curious episodes of the war that the Liberals opposed to Lloyd George, should adopt the slogan of 'Hands off the Austrian Empire.' Amongst the Liberals and Democrats that rallied to this watch-word were the strongest supporters of the Monarchy's preservation and those most willing to relegate the aspirations of the various nationalities within it to this strategic consideration. The Nation, edited by H.W. Massingham, had been originally highly critical of the "Habsburg Idea" and until mid-1916 at one with the pre-war view of Steed- and Seton-Watson. Although Massingham admitted that the Habsburg Idea was hardly democratic , he and others gathered around the Nation had been strongly impressed by Austria's resilience during the war which must betoken an inner strength of Kaisertreue and loyalty to the 'Reichsidee.' Thus, Henry Brailsford could say

Austria has endured the strain of war rather better than the whole generation of students would have predicted She has suffered disaster after disaster in the field. But with all these handicaps and trials there has as yet been no definite collapse and no actual disruption.(150)

Radical sympathies for Austria were heightened even more when they discovered that the German peace proposal of December 1916 had been at the Monarchy's initiative. The new Emperor Karl's dismissal of "German politicians" and their replacement by Czechs like Clam Martinić "who worked for very definite aims under Francis Ferdinand" seemed to point to a programme of

reconstruction in a federal sense. How far this reconstruction would go they were not sure, but the Radicals were sure that this would at least entail the creation of a South Slav state as a subordinate kingdom which would 'take the wind out of the sails' not only of Steed and Seton-Watson but also those elements in the government intent on destroying the Monarchy. In any case the Magyar ascendancy which had so captivated the Gladstonian Liberals (including, of course, initially, Seton-Watson himself) would be effectively at an end and the Empire would no longer be locked into a Mitteleuropa à l'Allemand. While it was difficult to see how precisely Austria could hope to extricate herself from "the octopus embrace of her ally" it was obvious, The Nation argued, that "without actually contemplating a separate peace, Austria is trying to open separate conversations with Britain and France in order to prepare the basis for a general peace." (151)

The Allied declaration of January 1910 with its "liberation clause" thus met with forthright denunciation from the Radicals and the so-called 'rational peace movement' who had enlisted in their support. Noel Buxton, who had previously up until 1915 supported this aim. Buxton admitted that the Czechs and Slavs wanted political emancipation but he was now convinced that this could be achieved by Home Rule and not just complete independence. The anti-Russian parties of the Monarchy had a genuine loyalty to the Empire and once again, alluding to the traditional axiom of the 'Balance of Power', argued that the political equilibrium of Europe would be upset, especially as the other multi-national state of Imperial Russia was as yet still intact, although showing serious signs of crumbling. The Radicals saw that the outright application of the principle of nationality, untrammelled by other considerations, could bring serious problems, as the nationalities of South East Europe, which Buxton knew very well, had not, they argued, reached the level of culture and civilisation making complete independence tenable. The Balkan Wars had proved that the Slav peoples were quite capable of turning on one another, racial affinities apart, and the undoubted high civilisation of German Kultur could very well be overwhelmed by the numerical majority of semi-literate Slav peasants. While the Transylvanian

peasants chaffed under Magyar rule, they were, nevertheless, materially better off than their co-nationals in the Kingdom of Roumania. As for the Galician Poles, Austria had treated them very well and in Bosnia, Buxton declared, "she had worked the same miracle in evolving order and prosperity that we wrought in Egypt," Buxton like Arnold, previously quoted, played greatly on the similarity of the problems of the British and Habsburg Empires, saying that "if the Serbs of Bosnia are as yet only partially self-Governing and by no means grateful are their sentiments greatly different from those of the Egyptian nationalists?" (152) Even when Professor Masaryk wrote to the Nation firmly repudiating his pre-war stance in support of Home Rule, the Radicals were not downhearted for "Roger Casement did not speak for Ireland, and it must be remembered that every subject race evolves its own Sinn Fein minority." (153)

While the Nation conceded that the Czechs were the most advanced culturally and politically of the Slav peoples, the creation of an independent Czech state was questioned on several grounds. For one there was a much bigger "Ulster" in the Germans of Bohemia and their potential amalgamation with the "simple and backward peasant race of the Slovaks" was unlikely to be successful. Economically the new state, landlocked and excluded from the sea would be scarcely tenable and in order not to fall victim to its jealous neighbours, Germany and Hungary, would have to maintain a large standing army, which in the very nature of things could only be oppressive to the large German minority. The total dismemberment of Austria could only be achieved by "the total moral and military extermination of the enemy" - a hardly desirable aim per se. (154)

The more vociferous pacifists like Outhwaite and Ponsonby were certain that the government intended to destroy the Monarchy even if Buxton in the Commons had some residual doubts since the word 'independence' was not actually mentioned, but cloaked under the term "liberation." Ponsonby was particularly suspicious since the term "Czechoslovaks" had never been used before - the reference had always been to Bohemia - and as far as he could gather "the Foreign Office seem a little doubtful as to where the territory of the Czechoslovaks is" and the Prime Minister himself

"was enquiring as exactly who the Czechoslovaks were,"(155)(The later proverbial country of which we know nothing, in Neville Chamberlain's words.)

It was highly suspicious in the Radicals' eyes that neither Balfour nor his deputy- nor for that matter the Home Secretary, Sir George Cave, were prepared to say what exactly "liberation" meant. The Radicals' strength in the Commons was minimal but their constant interpellations were highly embarrassing for the government showing that they certainly had something to hide. In fact, in pursuing what was a very ambiguous policy vis-à-vis the nationalities, Lloyd George's government suffered a severe loss in the intended effect both psychologically and from the propaganda point of view in its reply to the American President on war aims. The government's concern was so great that the circulation of the Nation abroad was banned in April. This measure by no means ended the problem of British policy makers. The crucial question was: Were Lloyd and Balfour merely out for the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary in order to diminish the fighting power of the Central Powers or did they really have the interests of the small nations at heart? Charles Trevelyan quite pointedly asked that if they really want the complete independence of the subject nations was this principle also to apply to Russia over Finland or more closely to Ireland involving Britain?(156) The Radicals' key argument was that it was impossible to secure a moderate Germany unless the Entente was prepared to be itself moderate and, therefore, the government should eschew any thoughts on the Monarchy's overthrow which it was almost certainly planning and then both sides could agree on the liberal solution of autonomy and Home Rule for South Slavs, the Czechoslovaks and the Roumanians within the Habsburg Empire. (157)

Radical appeals were suddenly roundly seconded by the outbreak of the March revolution in Russia with the declaration by the new Prime Minister, George Lvov: 'No annexations and no indemnities.' since the new Russian government and the new Ministers like Czernin in Vienna as well as Clam Martinič, favoured a peace without annexations, the appeal of the Russian Socialists was likely to have a greater effect on the Habsburg authorities than "the gratuitous contributions to greater Prussia"

of the Entente note.(158)

The revolution in Russia also galvanized discussion about the possible fate of the Habsburg Monarchy in circles which had not been particularly interested in it until then. The Conservative and ultra-patriotic Saturday Review, for example, had formerly paid little attention to those who argued that the Empire was literally at 'its wheat and wit's end' but now the weekly paid great attention to the possibility of a separate peace with Austria. Somewhat surprisingly, perhaps, the Review saw as the greatest danger not that Russia could now be induced to a separate peace but the internal conflict within the country would be exacerbated. The Review was particularly interested in the potential reorientation of Austrian policy now that the Pan-Slavist protectionism of the Tsarist government had been dealt a seemingly irreparable blow by its overthrow. Austria had been forced, nolens volens, into subservience to her more powerful ally Germany, whenever her Slav or Czech subjects threatened to revolt but now:

We believe that one of the possible results of the great change in Russian government is that Austria may emancipate herself from German tutelage and may thus preserve something from her ancient position in Europe.(159)

Given that a decisive military victory over the Central Powers seemed more remote than ever, both Radicals and Conservatives alike were questioning the fact that the dismemberment of the Habsburg Monarchy was a fixed and immutable part of Allied policy, which they clearly believed it was, evasiveness and silence on the part of the British government notwithstanding. Pointedly both sides of the political spectrum were asking whether the cause of civilisation would be advanced by dividing Central Europe into "a host of small and jarring nationalities and principalities" and in fact "converting Europe as a whole into one gigantic Balkan problem."(160) As far as both Radicals and Conservatives were concerned Balkanisation was emphatically a non desideratum and the Monarchy's remarkable staying power, not just during the war but over the centuries, should not be lightly dismissed when at a peace settlement it came to talk about remodelling the Empire let alone superseding (161) it. While Liberals argued that in the last analysis this should be left up to the peoples directly concerned the Conservatives

cast serious doubts on the wisdom of paying homage to the principle of nationality sans phrases and were less than convinced that its complete implementation would lead to lasting peace-whether in Europe or anywhere else.(162)

The Review was decidedly convinced that its application to the Habsburg Empire would be largely destructive of culture and civilization. Concessions to Italy would have to be made but for the rest of the Empire an "honest federalism", giving autonomy to the various national and racial groups, would be the best solution. Rounding up this line of reasoning, the Saturday Review concluded that the thorny question of the nationalities and its solution would depend to a large extent on the policy adopted by the new Emperor, but there was no gainsaying it that:

A great state in which the Slav races must be influential would be an invaluable counterpoise to the German Empire and would be far less likely to disturb the future Europe than a congeries of small nations."(163)

C.P. Scott, editor of the Liberal newspaper par excellence-the Manchester Guardian- echoed this sentiment when he said:

It is a large order to break up the Austrian Empire and to reconstruct its fragments..Would a South Slav State I wonder, hold together? These small Slavonic nationalities seem to have a wonderful capacity for fighting each other.
(164)

The Manchester Guardian had chosen to regard the Allied Note to Wilson as "maximum rather than minimum terms" but all the evidence tends to suggest the other way as we have seen and as Outhwaite and Ponsonby justifiably suspected. The desire for the Monarchy's dissolution was conveniently ascribed merely to the will of Imperial Russia which had now collapsed, forgetting that Grey and the British government had both tacitly and openly supported her designs on the Monarchy in the pre-war and eve of war period. The Manchester Guardian now appealed for a policy which would guarantee the Monarchy's territorial integrity after suitable concessions to Italy as a just reward for her abandoning the alliance with Germany.(165) This trend in a pro-Habsburg direction by public opinion is perhaps best epitomized by the Westminster Gazette when it declared on April 21st 1917:

We have always doubted the wisdom of making it appear that an Allied victory meant the destruction of Austria-Hungary and we doubt it even more now.(166)

The Nation, however, was inclined to exaggerate the position when it stated a month later that "no section of opinion

in Britain either vetoed or disapproved a closer approach to Austria."(167) Certainly the government noted this remark coolly. However, it is true, that even one of the chief jingoists, Lord Northcliffe, modified his views, if temporarily and much to Steed's alarm when he wrote to Steed informing him about an approach he had received from Retinger, an Austrian Pole, about the possibility of a separate peace:

I see no harm in pouparlers which do not pledge us to anything. I know it will get up the back of Russia, but after all Russia is to get her piece of cake in Constantinople.(168)

Steed was particularly alarmed when Northcliffe said that there were elements in the Foreign Office like Drummond and Russel who were inclined to think again about the official attitude as outlined in January. This element existed, but it must be said, it was not a decisive one; nevertheless Steed took the precaution of writing to Russel, saying:

Our attitude towards the Austrian question is a most important matter. We- that is to say the government- ought not to take up any attitude whatever, nor to suggest by implication that we might eventually take up this or that attitude without the most careful consideration, especially if the attitude be in any way, directly or indirectly, a departure from the policy outlined in the reply to President Wilson.(169)

Were the Foreign Office to revise its policy, Steed went on, then it would have to clearly define what sort of future Austria was envisaged; Was it a Habsburg rump, deprived of peripheral areas such as the Trentino, Galicia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Dalmatia with the essential elements of the Dualist system intact or was it a new Federal State, "a kind of Imperial Switzerland", such as Franz Ferdinand had envisaged? If indeed the latter were being contemplated by certain elements within the Foreign Office, then indeed the possibility of overcoming the resistance of the German and Magyar élites as well as the power of the German military was negligible. While the Emperor Karl might be "a well-meaning young man" Steed also accused him of being "a degenerate and habitual drunkard" on whom no statesman could scarcely base any coherent policy. A truncated, federalized Monarchy would be unable to withstand the enormous political and economic pressure of its neighbour, Germany. In fact "the Prussians aided and abetted by the Austro-Germans and the German Jews (Steed's perennial *bête noire*) would

then almost certainly "organize a stampede" of the Austro-Germans into the Reich effectively frustrating all Allied designs. Steed even hinted at the fact that any talk of a separate peace might be a Machiavellian plot by Germany to weaken the Allies (170) If Steed failed to convince the Conservative elements in the Foreign Office he, nevertheless, made them hesitate about pursuing any policy that could be considered pro-Austrian.

At this juncture (December 1916) Steed's strident 'Austria delenda est' was not only a cause of embarrassment in the Foreign Office; it is one thing to be pursuing a certain line of action quietly, another to shout it from the roof-tops- but also to the editor of The Times, who was reluctant to give him carte blanche for his platform- hence the founding with Seton-Watson of New Europe. The leitmotif of the new journal, as previously indicated was unequivocally one of 'Austria delenda est'. The Monarchy was emphatically beyond redemption, and could not now be saved by any kind of federalism, genuine or spurious. A new Slavonic federation might very well emerge in lieu of the disjecta membra of the Habsburg Empire but it could not be founded within the Monarchy "as some good-natured Englishmen suppose" without effectively restoring the German-Magyar domination the Allies had promised to overthrow. Steed was optimistic in believing that the emergence of Yugoslavia, Bohemia and a Greater Roumania would end for all time German domination of Central Europe. (171)

New Europe also welcomed the Russian revolution since the possibility now existed for the former "theocratic Empire" to transform itself into an eastern equivalent of the British Commonwealth- being both an empire and a democracy. The journal went on to delineate what it regarded as the essential difference between the British and Russian Empires on the one hand and the Austro-Hungarian on the other. The latter was based on the denial of the right of small nations to live their own lives but since in the former this principle was at last partially admitted, self-government within the state might justifiably be expected to assuage the natural desire of any people for legitimate self-expression. Such was hoped to be the case with Ireland and Finland. Only Poland seemed to be a somewhat intractable problem in the

eyes of New Europe. This whole line of reasoning, of course, could be considered highly contentious but probably not more so when it came to a consideration of the colonial subjects of both Britain and Russia. Here lies in evidence, quite clearly, the Orwellian principle of 'All animals are equal but some are more equal than others' for the right of self-determination- it was gainsaid- had to be dove-tailed with Allied interests- whether this were the British Crown colonies or Russia's Asiatic nationalities. Given that Lord Milner, for one, was not averse to comparing the Slav peoples unfavourably with the higher level of German Kultur and civilization, wherein lies the difference? Only a *parti pris* position, based on the exigences of the war and vested interest, could foster such an artificial distinction on these grounds between the supposed 'virtues' of the British and the Russian Empires on the one hand and the assumed deficiencies of the Austro-Hungarian on the other. As mentioned before, the Radical V. Arnold had explicitly drawn a parallel between the British and Austrian empires, saying that "the difficulties of the Habsburg Monarchy were similar to those of the British Empire." (172) However, New Europe under the aegis of Seton-Watson and Steed insisted that when a people's demand concerned their own territory- in the case of Britain and Russia- this nationality was supposed to enjoy "democratic liberty" within the boundaries of 'more civilized nations and states'- i.e. their own. However, the same development was to be denied to Austria-Hungary because, indirectly, it endangered the prosperity of the British Empire (and its allies) by keeping alive the prospect of a Mitteleuropa dominated by Britain's continental rival, Germany. Hence, New Europe (conveniently) argued that a democratic development for the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was not feasible and the Slav peoples could only enjoy real freedom with complete independence. *Quod erat demonstrandum*.

Taking it as axiomatic that the Allies would win the war- highly debatable at the time- there remained one major obstacle to this: the obvious imperialist aims of Italy in Dalmatia. With the Russian slogan of 'Peace with no annexations' and America's entry into the war in the Spring of 1917 the hope was raised that even Italy could be animated by 'the new democratic spirit.' Thus A. Evans summoned the Foreign Office to modify the Treaty of

London with Italy. For the sake of Italy's continuing adherence to the Allied cause, Evans conceded that "there must be no pedantic application of the principle of nationality" (double standards again) and that Italy must be permitted to occupy key strategic points on the Adriatic to strengthen her eastern flank such as Pola in Istria, the island of Lissa (where Tregethoff had famously defeated the Italians in 1866) and Valona in Albania but she was not to seize en masse any Dalmatian or Croatian territory. To do so would merely enflame the entire Slavonic world and incite yet another War of Liberation.

Thus, for New Europe the slogan of 'no annexations' could be happily accommodated with the journal's watch-word 'Pour la Victoire Intégrale' i.e. a military victory aiming at a just democratic peace.

Masaryk enthusiastically welcomed the magazine's approach and declared, significantly, that "the Oriental question (i.e. the fate of Austria-Hungary, as delineated in the Introduction to the thesis) which is the real issue of the war is gradually being merged in a world question." (173) This "world question", he went on was 'democracy.'

THE Hybris of Pangermanism, will be finally crushed by democracy, that is why the Russian revolution is so much feared by Germany and Austria-Hungary. These enemies of democracy know that the Russian revolution is the surest pledge of the Allies victory. (174)

It was certainly true that the possible spread of revolution seriously disturbed the Emperor Karl, hence the need for an early end to the war. In a letter to the German Emperor Wilhelm on April 14th, he declared, unequivocally:

We are fighting against a new enemy which is more dangerous than the Entente: against the international revolution, which finds its strongest ally in the general hunger. (175)

Despite this displayed optimism by Masaryk New Europe realized that the projected partition of Austria-Hungary might very well prove a serious stumbling block to the Russian anti-Imperialists. Indeed the Council of Labour and Soldiers' Delegates objected strongly to the new Russian Foreign Minister, Paul Milyukov's policy for 'complete victory' as opposed to 'a complete victory for democracy.' While declaring that the allegation that the Council supported the preservation of the old international borders at any cost was 'a bourgeois smear' the Delegates, nevertheless declared that "in spite of the abnormal

position of that country" they were unconvinced that "a number of nationalities there are striving to free themselves from the yoke of Austro-Hungarian Dualism." (176)

Given the promises made to Italy and Roumania the Council was surely right to be suspicious of British and other Allied claims to be so concerned about the fate of the slavonic peoples of the Empire.

The Russian socialists were convinced that only a general meeting of the representatives of all the national groupings interested in the "solution of the Austrian problem" could be considered legitimate, especially in view of the enormous inherent difficulties in possibly creating new national states. A platform ad hoc was to be the Socialist Conference of the International in Stockholm on May 15th. This call by the Soviets immediately sparked off a debate in the Commons the day after. (177)

There, the well-known pacifist M.P. Philip Snowden made a similar declaration to that of the Russian government, i.e. an unequivocal repudiation of any proposal for imperialist conquest and territorial aggrandizement and invited the British government to do the same. The policy of the scheduled conference should be "to secure such re-adjustment of territory as will remove one cause of war", i.e. resentment at being subject to an anti-racial alien rule but he stressed that it would not be easy or possible "to redraw the map of Europe and to make race and governmental area co-terminous." (178) Government Ministers, however, remained conspicuously silent, until prompted by Snowden again, A.F. Whyte, a close associate of Seton-Watson's, replied that "the possibility of a permanent settlement in the Balkans implied 'the disturbance' (!) of the present Austro-Hungarian Monarchy." Only the Habsburg dynasty could call this dismemberment. (!) Whyte was then seconded by his colleague Mackinder who claimed that "the rescue" of the Serbs, Roumanians and Italians could scarcely be construed as "Imperialist conquest" since Austria was not a nation but quite different from the other states of Europe- "it was a dynastic group of properties, sui generis." Whyte then said he could not believe that Russian democrats wanted their brother Slavs to remain under foreign domination. One of the foremost Allied demands must be "to secure a re-sorting of the peoples of South-Eastern Europe in such a

way that it should be built of free nationalities and not a mere heap of peoples kept together by military control."(179)

Robert Cecil, the chief defender of government policy in the Commons, was both cautious and decidedly evasive in his reply, saying that he did want the term "annexation" applied to "the release of misgoverned populations under the Ottoman Empire and the German colonies" nor "Poland, Alsace-Lorraine and Italia Irredenta." The restoration to Italy "of provinces populated by Italians" was something the government could not give up but in view of the "no annexation" demand at home and abroad he agreed that it would not be right to defend the Italian claims in toto. Both Radicals and New Europe could be pleased with this repudiation of British support for Italian imperialism but both failed to extract any new statements from the government on the question of Austria-Hungary, Cecil merely repeated the clause in the note to Wilson:

All that is said is the liberation of these races from alien domination.(180)

Neither the supporters of New Europe nor the Radicals were satisfied by this reply and when a Radical exclaimed "dismemberment" Cecil fell silent and looked away.

CHAPTER VII

THE FINAL ACT

It might be cogently argued that in 1917 official British policy still resembled a kind of two-edged sword that cut both ways, the eventual direction depending on the course of military events. As long as the dénouement remained undecided, the political implications of anti-Austrian propaganda were not endorsed sans qualification, although the underlying leitmotif was undoubtedly clear. Occasional ambivalence, however, was often interspersed by seemingly definite statements to the Monarchy's detriment, as has been seen in the Allied Note of January 10th.

Throughout the remaining 18 months or so of the war elements of the Foreign Office clung to the hope that Austria could be enticed away from her alliance with Germany through war-weariness and economic exhaustion if nothing else. Indeed, Austria's military and political situation by the middle of July 1917 was described as being highly critical by various sources, including the Foreign Office. As a result, on August 3rd, Gregory, a Senior Clerk in the Foreign Office drew up a memorandum in which he said that "to break the power of Berlin and Budapest" the new Emperor, Karl, was believed to be "politically determined on Trialismus" on the lines of his murdered uncle and "was naturally anxious on principle to make a separate peace with England and France." (1) There were, however, two principal obstacles to this. Firstly, the Russian Revolution had given hopes to powerful elements within the Ballhausplatz that the Central Powers might yet win and, secondly, that Austria would be expected to make a separate peace "on the basis of her own liquidation as directed by England and France in the Italian and Roumanian agreements and the note to President Wilson." (2) While Gregory did not necessarily want the agreements honoured he, nevertheless regarded the treaties as still valid and put "the liberation clause" on an equal footing with them. (One might add that it would have required a large stretch of the imagination to believe that the Habsburg authorities could or would agree for one moment to a peace entailing their promise to commit suicide.) When Karl heard of this his indignation knew no bounds and however much in the realms of fantasy he wondered if it would not be possible to construct a continental bloc (with

France inter al.) against "l'Albion perfide" - a sentiment which the French would readily recognize.(3) Moreover, Karl was additionally exasperated by the unremitting campaign in important sections of the British press for the destruction and dismemberment of the Monarchy, as seen in the previous chapter. The Foreign Secretary, Balfour himself, hardly helped matters when he declared in the House of Commons on July 27th 1917 that the British government was bound "by every tie of loyalty to Serbia, Greece and Roumania."(4) Such comments could hardly reassure the new Habsburg ruler that any meaningful conversations could take place.

Where decidedly negative comments were absent, ambivalence was the order of the day, which merely heightened Austrian suspicions of British *bonne foi*.. And this was not all. Seton-Watson's comments in a memorandum on 'War feelings in Austria-Hungary', which was specifically requested by the Secretary of the War Cabinet and the Foreign Secretary, caused further consternation, since it lambasted Austrian attempts through Count Mensdorff, the former popular Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Britain to make contact with the British legation in neutral Switzerland. Seton-Watson remarked, disparagingly:

The primary object of Germany's and Austria's many agents on keeping the idea of a separate peace always to the fore is to create bad blood between the various members of the Entente and to exploit conflicting interests and to play upon the naïveté of well-meaning but ignorant pacifist politicians.(5)

When at Count Czernin, the Austrian Foreign Minister's promptings, the influential Reichstag deputy, Mathias Erzberger succeeded in having a resolution passed on July 19th "calling for peace and a mutual understanding and lasting reconciliation amongst the nations", condemning forcible acquisitions of territory and "political, economic and financial violations"(6) the British government found itself in a very embarrassing situation. The Radicals in the House of Commons immediately challenged the government on all the Allied commitments and declarations which had been made hitherto vis-à-vis the Habsburg Monarchy. Noel Buxton opened the attack on July 24th with a stinging rebuke to those who argued that "Austria is the chief enemy."(7) Declaring his own 'mea culpa' that he once "was one

of the apostles of this doctrine" and had advocated the Monarchy's destruction, he now realized there was "a genuine *idée autrichienne*" which had wide support throughout the Empire. (8) Furthermore, he argued, the new Russia had declined to lift a finger to break Austria up and there was no evidence that America wanted to embark on that road. As to the political representatives in the Reichsrat, Buxton said he could not see "any conversion to independence in their eloquent speeches but rather" a picture of a genuine Eastern Federal State, combining nationalism with Habsburg continuity." (9) Buxton then 'took a swipe' at "the unrepresentative agitation of *émigré* leaders assisted by a little group of professors and journalists in this country who are 'working' the Press and public opinion" (10) - and it was quite clear that he had Masaryk, Steed and Seton-Watson inter al. in mind. Such people were positively "mischievous" in his view because not only were they discouraging the peace party in Austria but also fuelling the arguments of the pro-German and Magyar extremists that Britain, for one, would not be content with anything short of the Monarchy's complete annihilation. (11)

Buxton's colleague, King, then drew the House's attention to a blatantly anti-Habsburg and pro-Yugoslav declaration by three War Cabinet Ministers, Barnes, Carson and Milner, along with John Buchan and Seton-Watson which, *prima facie*, seemed to confirm collusion against the Monarchy at the highest level. Indeed, both King and another Radical, Dillon, believed that both Buchan and Seton-Watson had direct access to the Prime Minister, Lloyd George without even the need for the intervention of the Foreign Office and were in fact members of the intimate "Garden Party" (sic) in Downing Street with "access to "diplomatic and special sources." (12)

When challenged, the Acting Foreign Secretary, Robert Cecil, reverted to his usual *modus operandi* of refusing to disclose what exactly the government's position towards the Yugoslav movement was. The Radicals' suspicions were further enhanced when Balfour added that it was impossible to specify "how the Allies were going to deal with such a great and ancient Monarchy as Austria" adding, ominously, "there would be a certain rearrangement

....such a modification of the political forces in Europe that there will not be a balance of power in precisely the old 18th century sense of the word."(13)

Meanwhile, in Whitehall, Noel Buxton's pamphlet 'The Entente and the Allies of Germany' was taken to task by L.S. Amery who concluded that the idea of securing a separate peace was "inherently absurd" since it ignored "the essential interest and principles which had led to two alliances in the first place."(14) Amery, effectively, poured water on the whole project, saying: "To imagine that we can buy off Germany's allies without beating them on terms which would break our own alliance is a dangerous illusion."(15)

That the Austrian government was indeed anxious for serious peace negotiations was admitted by Balfour in his 'Memorandum on Peace Negotiations' on September 1917, when he said that unlike Bulgaria and Turkey, Germany's other allies, "the advances from Austria had come from the highest quarters in the established government."(16) However, when Prince L. Lubomirski, a cousin of a member of the Polish Regency approached Sir Esme Howard in Stockholm and suggested as a token of Allied good faith that the British government make a declaration to the fact that "a dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire was not aimed at" the Foreign Office declined to do so.(17) Balfour went so far as to add that "no such declaration would ever be assented to by our friends."(18)

Balfour's whole agendum appeared to be one of seeking to detach Austria from Germany but without offering Austria any effective quid pro quo in return. Balfour was evidently hoping that the Monarchy would be forced to an early peace at all costs for fear of a revolution of her subject nationalities, given the stress and strain of the war. Thus, he commented on October 19th: "If Austria is really in extremis, she must come to us."(19) A more one-sided idea of negotiations would be harder to imagine.

Through the auspices of the French Minister of War Paul Painlevé, Lloyd George learnt of a meeting between Count Revertera, a confidant of the Emperor Karl and a French intelligence officer called Abel Armand in Fribourg, Switzerland

in which the Emperor had intimated that he was prepared to go a very long way in a democratic direction to secure peace and the future of Austria. He readily agreed to the principle of a federalized Austria (if not Hungary), the restitution of Serbia with a sea-port and the evacuation of Roumania which had been occupied by Austro-German forces after the latter's intervention on the Allied side in August 1916. Significantly too, the different races and peoples of Austria were to receive autonomous government in an Austrian confederation to which a reconstituted Poland (Austrian and Russian parts) would be associated as an independent kingdom under an Austrian prince. In fact the Emperor seemed only too willing to meet the Allied request for the liberation of the nationalities by accepting the solution of the "United States of the Danube", provided, that is, that Britain was not focused on the Empire's destruction.(20)

Painlevé believed that this federal scheme offered a plausible answer to many of the demands of the nationalities and the commitment to Roumania. The black spot was Italy. Karl had said he was extremely reluctant to satisfy the Italians for this "would hopelessly antagonize his own peoples" (i.e Croats and Slovenes) since "too much Austrian blood had been shed for the defence of lands demanded by Italy," i.e a large section of the Adriatic littoral. Trieste could not be ceded either, although Karl was willing to consider raising its status to that of a free port.(21) Lloyd George, however, was not so willing to discomfort the Italian ally as the French, as he was actively contemplating a significant offensive on the Italian front against Austria. In fact Lloyd George was convinced that:

The repeated and urgent advances made by Austria during the present year, many of them emanating from authoritative quarters, prove that those who have the direction of affairs in Austria are nervous and alarmed as to the prospect of military defeat. All the information received points in one direction- that Austria is on the point of collapse, and that it needs but powerful and vigorous pressure to precipitate her downfall.(22)

From an allied point of view military success was necessary for peace negotiations because "no peace could be possible", Lloyd George argued, "without satisfying the legitimate claims of Italy" and no Italian statesman dare make peace without securing the Trentino and Trieste. Once Italian pride had been

assuaged by military success and Austrian morale correspondingly debilitated, then peace negotiations to the Allied advantage could be more likely carried out. Encouraged by his personal interview with Prince Sixtus that Austria was now prepared to surrender the Trentino only Trieste remained as the greatest problem in Lloyd George's view. However, since Trieste was one of the earliest possessions of the House of Austria, dating back over 500 years, she could not reasonably be expected to give it up unless it were actually conquered.

However, whatever hopes Lloyd George had in this direction were to be completely shattered when instead of military victory the Italians suffered devastating defeat at Caporetto in October 1917. Czernin, the Austrian Foreign Minister, still, nevertheless proved conciliatory, informing his representatives in The Hague and Switzerland that he wished to establish contacts 'officieusement' with Britain and that if she was prepared to have an 'officieuse' conversation on the subject of peace, the Austrian government would pledge its word to keep the discussions secret. Czernin further added that Austria's resounding victory over the Italians would not affect his attitude to peace proposals.

The pros and cons of such contacts had been analysed in a memorandum by H. Nicolson on August 22nd who declared that:

We should consider the possibility of entertaining negotiations with these representatives from the point of view, not of detaching Austria from the alliance (which is impossible) but of placing the German government in a position which it would be difficult for them to justify either to their own people or their allies.(24)

The Foreign Office, however, declined to pursue the matter and tended to pour cold water on the project in view of Nicolson's comment that Austria would not desert her ally Germany. If anything officials there took comfort in the gloomy memorandum by Czernin himself, which had been leaked to Entente circles by the second half of August through the indiscretion of the German parliamentarian, Erzberger, that Austria was on the point of collapse anyway. According to Leipnik: "Austria cannot enter a new winter campaign. This undeniable fact ought to be the basis of all considerations." But he did not doubt that the Austro-Hungarian desire for peace was perfectly sincere", if only for the aforementioned reason.(25)

Cecil, however, suspected that Czernin was trying to entice

Britain into secret negotiations with Vienna in order to help the Austrians persuade the Italians to make peace with the Habsburgs instead of continuing to fight with the Entente powers.

(26) Significantly, the Germans were rather embarrassed by the diplomatic activity of their ally, showing that they by no means had complete control over her, as certain elements in the Foreign Office believed. In fact they were highly suspicious of possibly being brought into discussions for a general peace to which they did not subscribe. Although there is absolutely no evidence to substantiate it, the mere possibility, however remote, that Germany might be behind the diplomatic activity led the Foreign Office to conclude- quite unreasonably- that "Austria's peace manoeuvres are part of Germany's game." (27) This was undoubtedly a reflection of certain intransigent attitudes within the Foreign Office that viewed any attempt at a *modus vivendi* with Austria with acute disfavour.

In December 1917 an intriguing memorandum was provided for the Foreign Office by two prominent Polish leaders, Professor Pinski, a former governor of Galicia, and Perlovski, a leading exile, living in Switzerland, both of them pro-Allied. They took the view that as long as the war went on it was impossible for Austria to break the bonds that linked her to Germany, saying:

Those who suppose that she will conclude a separate peace, commit an error..She will stay at this to the end of the war. But I feel equally entitled to express my deep conviction that she will rejoice in her complete independence after the war. (28)

That Karl was intent on remodelling the Empire into some kind of Federal Union, including a reconstituted Poland under Austrian rather than German aegis, as the Central Powers had proclaimed in November 1917, they did not doubt. They felt sure, too, that a renovated Danubian Monarchy would be in a position to defend her independence and to successfully secure the freedom for all her subject nationalities to develop as they wished, which 'Germanism' had impeded for so long. (29) In this respect, they argued, Dmowski, leader of the Polish National Committee in Paris, was in a minority when he called for "the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire" and what he termed "a Medieval relic" on the basis of "the principle of nationality." (30)

She will brilliantly succeed, they concluded:

If the Allies do not oppose her efforts. Will they commit such an error? It can hardly be supposed. Every political man perceives after Russia's breakdown, the destruction of Austria means a general break-up and that it would be equivalent to the removal of the last barrier opposed in the East and the South to unrestrained Germanism..The world needs a great and prosperous Austria and knows that the greater she is, the more she will be freed from any German influence.(31)

There were distinct echoes here of the Czech Palacky's remark in the late 1840's:"If Austria did not exist, Europe would have to invent her."(32)

While it was true that these reflections were found "interesting" and "attractive" by certain elements in the Foreign Office, Gregory, the Assistant Clerk, saw "an irreconcilable contradiction between the "assumed willingness of Austria to make a separate peace and the aspired re-unification of Poland with Austrian help" which could only be achieved by military means since "no diplomatic combinations at the peace settlement will ever force Posen from Germany."(33)

After the Paris Conference in January 1917 the situation of the Habsburg Empire was analysed by Harold Nicolson, who, in contrast to most of his senior colleagues, had an extensive knowledge of Austro-Hungarian affairs. In his view there was no solution to Austria's "eternal dilemma between vassalage or disruption." If the Central Powers won then Austria would be even more subservient to Berlin and he opined that:

Even if the Emperor Karl were forced towards (a reconstruction) he would not find it possible to reestablish the former equilibrium of discontent which has been the sole cohesive force in the Empire by an adoption of that Slav policy to which he is stated to show so strong an inclination. (34)

More to the point, perhaps, however, is that any compromise peace with Austria would involve sacrificing the interests of Britain's other allies and this, when 'it came to the crunch', the British refused to do. The interests of Italy loomed particularly large in Britain's calculations.

To end the war by diplomatic negotiations was also urged strongly on the Austro-Hungarian side by the radical Hungarian Count Michael Károlyi, one of the leading figures in the Hungarian

Independence Party. At liberty to travel to Switzerland, he informed British agents there that he wanted to see an Austro-Hungarian peace agreement with the Entente, taking as its point de départ a scheme for a reconstructed and revitalized Habsburg Empire, subdivided into five federal states under the dynasty. They were to be Austria (minus the Trentino), Bohemia, Poland (Austrian and Russian parts only), Hungary, including Transylvania and Yugoslavia, comprising not just Croatia and Dalmatia but Serbia and Montenegro too.

The Foreign Office's reaction to Karolyi's 'ballon d'essai' was decidedly mixed. Hardinge was essentially negative, finding Károlyi "not strong-eyed and not deserving serious attention"(35) - which was the verdict of the Foreign Secretary himself.

Drummond, for his part, thought his proposals intriguing and certainly worthy of consideration. Thus, in spite of his colleague's scepticism, Drummond made Károlyi's musings the subject of a detailed memorandum. With the collapse of Russia, Drummond argued, the political scenario in East Central Europe had changed dramatically to the detriment of the smaller slavonic states that could no longer look to her "as the protector against Teutonism." Consequently, he asked, rhetorically, "would it not be advisable to turn elsewhere to find a bar to German expansionism?" And he concluded: "It may be a reconstituted and liberalized Austrian Empire that the Allies desire."(36)

Drummond in fact resurrected a schema which he believed "would probably have come to pass if the Archduke Franz Ferdinand had come to the throne." Specifically, this entailed the creation of a Yugoslav state (including Serbia, as with Károlyi) "with complete autonomy under the nominal rule of the Habsburgs" while the Serbian dynasty would remain like the kings of Bavaria and Saxony."(37) While Hardinge rejected the idea, he did, however, consider the possibility of "creating a strong Austrian bloc which need not necessarily be hostile to a Balkan bloc and which might constitute still another barrier against German expansionism eastwards."(38)

After the collapse of Russia and the Italian defeat at Caporetto, the British Foreign Office was forced to consider any option to counter Germany's perceived ambitions in Eastern Europe.

Consequently, the War Cabinet commissioned General Smuts, whose political Weltanschauung was conditioned by acute concern for the fate of the British Empire and Commonwealth, to travel to Switzerland to hold talks with representatives from Austria. Although Smuts had a limited knowledge of Habsburg affairs, he was, nevertheless, considered to be just the man for an 'exploratory mission' to discover if there were sufficient grounds for a general understanding between the two countries. The recognized experts, Seton-Watson and Steed, had been ruled out a priori, owing to their irremediable anti-Habsburg bias, while Lord Derby, who counted Count Mensdorff as a personal friend, was felt likely to draw too much attention to the mission because of his prominence, and thus arousing suspicions on all sides. (39) Smuts had gravitated to a similar view as Lord Milner by the Spring of 1917, declaring that one of the four major war aims of the British Empire was:

A settlement which will limit or destroy the military predominance of the Germanic powers, though the actual details may be left open to the peace conference. (40)

As for Milner "the military predominance" was the cause célèbre and not- necessarily- the political existence of the Central Powers- which he assumed was their reason for fighting- particularly the Monarchy. Thus in a speech at Sheffield on October 24th he said:

We do not want to break up Germany or Austria, we do not want to break up anybody or anything. But lines must be laid down by which the small nations can come into their own. If they cannot be independent, let them be autonomous and not tyrannized over by imperious Empires. I do not think the world will split up into small states. The tendency will rather be the other way round. But it will be on national lines. (41)

This was, of course, a far more moderate stance than that espoused by the Foreign Office up to now and quite different from the forthright Allied statement in January. Its conciliatory tone, however, was not just reflective of serious military defeats but genuinely represented the views of Smuts and the New Imperialists like Milner. Although it has been argued in this thesis that Sir Edward Grey- protests to the contrary notwithstanding- did not believe in the traditional 'Balance of Power' doctrine of previous governments, Smuts did. Thus, he was convinced that the destruction of Germany- if that were the Allied

aim- might very well lead to a political power vacuum into which "seven worse devils may come" and this applied, *mutatis mutandis* to the Habsburg Empire. Smuts and many other British statesmen were increasingly alarmed by the military and political disintegration of Russia along with the mutiny of both French and British troops in France, fearing that the Emperor Karl's prognostication that "the international revolution" might be a greater danger than the enemy, was being fulfilled. Indeed, in the words of one of Smuts's regular correspondents, Lord Loreburn:

If we are to carry out the claims of Sonnino (Italy), Pasić (Yugoslavia) and others, the war cannot possibly be ended till famine and epidemics, and anarchy have destroyed civilization.(42)

Balfour's *prima facie* equivocation vis-à-vis Austria was also directly related to the military disasters that had befallen the Allied cause in Russia and Italy. Thus, when pressed by Horodyski (a pro-Allied Polish agent) for a definite announcement in favour of an independent Poland and Bohemia, he demurred, saying that he personally sympathized with the Bohemians, but "owing to their geographical position..the utmost they could hope for was home-rule within the Empire."(43) When Smuts said the same about the Yugoslavs, Balfour agreed although "it was greatly to be deplored," (44) Thus, Balfour's personal feelings were one thing but the existing political and military situation quite another. In the last analysis, it may be said, Balfour's cool comments on Smuts's suggestions about seeking a *modus vivendi* with Vienna came down to the question of whether Britain should sacrifice the claims of the smaller nationalities for the hope of an anti-German course by the Habsburg government in the near future.

However, the view that the internal structure of the Monarchy should be left to the discretion of the Vienna and Budapest governments and accepted the Austria-Hungary-Germany axis as a political fact of life was scarcely official policy in London. Nevertheless, with the strengthening of pacifist forces in Britain following the Bolshevik revolution, the *Neue Freie Presse* declared that it was "almost a duty that a word should be addressed to the British nation as to whether a conversation would be possible."(45)

Accordingly, Count Czernin, the Foreign Minister gave a detailed expose of Austria's policy in a speech to the Delegation (the joint committee of the Austrian and Hungarian parliaments)

on December 4th 1917 saying that he deplored "the brutal formula" of the Entente powers that demanded the right of self-determination for the peoples of the Austro-Hungarian empire and questioned the Monarchy's right to control its own territorial existence. In his view, this demand for self-determination was merely a subterfuge to cover the projected forcible sundering of Habsburg territory for the benefit of their minor allies. The Entente, he noted, had never been keen to grant this right to the subject peoples of the British, Russian, French and Italian empires. Finally, Czernin concluded:

The question of nationalities inside the various states regulating their relations to one another and to the State, this is not an international but an internal question.(46)

Czernin did not wish, however, to appear completely intransigent and so he agreed to a meeting between Count Mensdorff and Smuts in Switzerland. Interestingly- and contrary to what he said to the German ambassador- this does not appear to have been sanctioned by Berlin beforehand.(47)

Smuts intention at the meeting was "to instil into the minds of the Austrians that were they to free themselves from German domination" they would have "the full sympathy and support of the British Empire."(48) This was something which Czernin, for one, seriously doubted given official Allied pronouncements up to now. Mensdorff made it abundantly clear that Austria was prepared to do anything to secure "an honourable peace short of deserting her ally during the war", and she would scarcely contemplate such "a treacherous and dishonourable action"- even though, Karl, of(49) course, had indicated that in certain circumstances he would not rule a separate peace out. (Whether "the German ally" would allow this, was another matter entirely.) Smuts answered that Allied statesmen were now principally concerned with creating a counter-weight to Germany in the East now that Russia was effectively hors de combat, stressing once again that "if Austria was prepared to break with Germany" the Entente would do everything in their power "to uphold and strengthen her and to assist her economic reconstruction."(50)

Although Smuts personally repudiated the Allied Note of January 1917, he could not guarantee that the Allied governments

would do the same and Mensdorff was not convinced that they had had a fundamental change of heart. It was more likely a tactical move determined by the recent reverses suffered on the military front.

The whole tenor of the Smuts- Mensdorff negotiations was rather in the nature of an academic discussion in which Smuts held out the prospect of a South-East European confederation, comprising Poland, an enlarged Serbia and possibly Roumania of which Austria-Hungary would be the *spiritus movens*. However, the *quid pro quo* would be that the Monarchy would have to satisfy the irredentist aspirations of the Italians and Roumanians. Mensdorff was by no means opposed to appeasing Serbia with a free port- or even a strip of territory on the Dalmatian littoral- but he refused to consider concessions to a beaten Roumania by the cession of Transylvania or to Italy with the surrender of Trieste and the Trentino, particularly after the latter's betrayal of the Monarchy in 1915. Such a suggestion was completely *hors de jeu*. Austria would not now surrender "a foot of ground" to Italy- least of all any Slovene or Croatian territory on the principle of nationality! (One might say the Allies were hoisted on their own petard in this respect.) (51) Significantly, Smuts refused to consider the question of a general peace or any terms with Germany at all, in spite of Mensdorff's repeated offer to act as a mediator between Britain and Germany. This led Mensdorff to conclude that the British *arrière pensée* was really to gain Austria's support for effectively coercing Germany into accepting terms which were favourable to the Entente. There was, indeed, more than a little degree of wishful thinking in Smuts's declaration when he said:

From the very depth of her abasement and despair, Austria has been made to see daylight, and I expect that she will strain every nerve to induce Germany to accept moderate terms, and that she will therefore strive, with our assistance, to recover and assert her political independence of Germany. (52)

This would, *prima facie*, appear to confirm Mensdorff's suspicions of the unspoken leitmotif of the discussions all along. When the Radical Buxton quizzed Smuts on March 17th 1918 whether the interview implied leaving Austria intact and in possession of Trieste, Smuts replied: "Not intact, but it would be mad to cut

off Austria from the sea, when we are claiming a port for Poland." (53)

All things considered it is hardly to be wondered if Austrian statesmen did not quite know what to think when negotiating with the British. The Allied declaration of January 1917 could not so easily be discarded from Austria's mind, particularly since the British government was evidently quite unwilling to renounce it publicly in spite of what Smuts was saying both at Sheffield and tête-à-tête with Mensdorff in Switzerland. Moreover, Austria could scarcely be expected to repudiate the only ally she really had in order to maintain herself (and for whose preservation, according to Gerhard Ritter inter al Germany had gone to war in the first place- vide Introduction), even if her complete independence had been compromised thereby, for what were basically vague assurances of Allied good-will. (The Yugoslavs too were often given assurances of good-will but then they ultimately took matters into their own hands in the autumn of 1918 with unilateral declarations of independence, presenting the Allies with a set of faits accomplis.) Putting it crudely, from the Austrian point of view 'a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush'- even if it were a modified Prussian eagle

Undoubtedly, it was 'the Austrian issues' which formed most of the intricate topics that stood in the way of a 'satisfactory' peace, as far as Smuts was concerned- particularly "the resentment at the conduct of Italy and Roumania." (54)

Paradoxically, perhaps, when it came to a question of settling accounts with Germany there were only too major issues in dispute: Alsace-Lorraine and the German colonies- assuming, of course, that Germany was prepared to evacuate Belgium and Northern France. The fate of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 'la nouvelle question de l'Orient', as André Chéradame and Masaryk inter al. had recognized, was the decisive factor as Smuts too had discerned. Cecil, for his part, was extremely sceptical about any viable reconstructing of the Habsburg Empire, which was the predominant feeling throughout the Foreign Office. Personally, he said he set little stock by the Emperor Karl's alleged liberal and pro-Slav sentiments, saying that in any case:

Autocrats and Ministers have very little power. The policy of Austria-Hungary will always be the policy of its German and Magyar populations. (55)

Not only Balfour but Smuts was reluctantly forced to agree too. Nevertheless, one practical suggestion by Mensdorff was to bear fruit: the request that the British state their terms for peace so that both the Monarchy and Germany could know exactly what the Entente's war aims were: Were they still that of the January Note with all the appalling consequences for the Dual Monarchy that that implied? The campaign for a fundamental reappraisal of war aims had been strenuously pursued by the Petrograd Soviet and after some hesitation the Provisional Government of Russia agreed. However, when Britain, together with France finally gave way to this pressure, it was already too late and the scheduled inter-Allied conference to revise the war aims never took place. The procrastinating attitude adopted by both Britain and France towards the demand for a "democratic peace" was, in fact, partly responsible for the fall of Kerensky's government. The Russian appeal for peace was to become irrepressable and after the Bolshevik revolution their decree called for the immediate opening of peace negotiations- the beginning of an independent peace initiative.(56) Highly disturbed by this development, Lord Lansdowne attempted to convince the government of the desirability of a negotiated peace(57), since he was certain that the Central Powers, particularly Germany, could not be defeated militarily. Not only did Lansdowne want the threat to the territorial integrity of the Monarchy publicly rescinded but also the 'sword of Damocles' threat to destroy Germany economically. Therefore, he urged the British government to declare, *urbi et orbi*, and without qualification, that it no longer sought to destroy or ~~dis~~member either of the Central Powers. Faced with this reproach Balfour responded by saying that apart from the transfer of certain peripheral areas such as Alsace Lorraine and the Polish-speaking districts of eastern Germany he neither sought the destruction of Germany nor its dismemberment and what was true of the Reich "might surely be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to Austria also "(58)- "might", however, being the operative word.

In a letter to The Daily Telegraph on November 29th, Lansdowne referred directly to the Allied Note, saying that "some of the original desiderata have probably become unobtainable" and "when it comes to the wholesale rearrangement of the map of S, Eastern Europe we may well ask for a suspension

of judgement."(59) In fact, Lansdowne was calling upon the British government to revert to a policy of 'detached désintéressement' vis-à-vis Eastern Europe as a whole, which led to an immediate vitriolic response from the Northcliffe press and New Europe. The latter, in particular, deeply regretted the fact that the Radical peacemakers had evidently found a powerful ally:

In revolutionary times extremes meet, and it need not surprise us to note the gradual formation of a new coalition between reactionaries like Lord Lansdowne and doctrinaires like The Nation..It is not yet sufficiently realized that there is a small but active school of individuals who would have us "scrap" as Utopians many of the war aims of our small Allies- especially, of course like Serbia and Roumania- and concentrate upon our own selfish aims.(60)

Lansdowne commanded more support than New Europe was willing to admit, including that of influential papers such as the Manchester Guardian and the Westminster Gazette. Colonel House, too, (President Wilson's special envoy) noted a new section of moderate industrialists, merchants and bankers along with figures such as Hirst, Brailsford, Massingham, Lansbury, Spender, C.P. Scott and Asquith, the former Premier.(61)

On December 4th Wilson finally declared war on Germany's allies, including Austria-Hungary, but, paradoxically, as this might seem, this was by no means a pointer to a decidedly anti-Habsburg course, but rather reflective of military events on the Italian Front. Indeed, simultaneously, he assured Austrian statesmen that "America did not wish in any way to impair or to rearrange the Austro-Hungarian Empire but offered her peace on practically any terms if she would only break with Prussia."(62) This must have been one of the few occasions in history when a declaration of war and an offer of peace have been made in almost the same breath.

President Wilson's declaration was immediately seized upon by the opposition in the House of Commons where Philip Snowden brusquely asked that in view of what the American President had said, would the British government now revise its war aims as they affected the Habsburg Empire- i.e. the implicit threat to dismantle it. Balfour tried to side-step the issue by saying that he was not going to "attempt any interpretation of President Wilson's speech" although it was quite clear to every one what he had actually said. In an appeal to all Liberal M.P.s Noel Buxton and Wedgewood condemned "extravagant aims such as the

destruction of Austria" which now enlisted the support of former government supporters such as Arthur Greenwood. Beyond "a just and much needed rectification of the Italian frontier", he argued, "the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary should be no part of the Allied terms.²(63) Somewhat at variance with this, however he still considered that "on balance the deliverance of the misgoverned Slavs under Austrian rule" would benefit humanity.(64)

Unusually, A.F. Whyte, the editor of New Europe rejoined in a conciliatory tone, saying:

It is wrong to suggest as is often done now that we have no quarrel with the Habsburg Monarchy. Doubtless the extent and depth of the quarrel depends on the relations of Vienna and Berlin, but as long as they are now and as long as the whole system of government is unchanged in Austria- and especially in Hungary- the Monarchy will be a menace to European peace.(65)

Given the widespread criticism of the extreme aims of the January statement and Wilson's noticeable moderate stance, Whyte had little option but to adopt a less aggressive stance himself. This reply to Buxton was typical of the anti-Habsburg forces in Britain. While it could be argued that Whyte was not advocating the destruction of the Monarchy per se but rather 'the liberation' of her Slav subjects so that they could no longer be exploited for Germany's economic and military ends, this was certainly the aim of the Slav leaders in exile and their supporters such as Steed and Seton-Watson.

In spite of the differing conceptions of a future peace conference all the major political circles agreed on the need for a reformulation of the war aims, particularly in view of the publication of the secret treaties by the Soviet government. The Manchester Guardian had undertaken to print them on December 12th. (66) Seven days later on December 19th, in an extended debate in the Commons, Balfour, crucially, tried to defend them and was quickly attacked by many members of the Liberal opposition.(67) Wedgwood declared that Balfour's views "were completely outdated while J.W. Wilson argued that after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia any hesitation in restating the "original" war aims was completely misplaced Since Russia had abandoned the war (the peasant soldiers' having voted with their feet', Roumania had been occupied and Italy shattered at Caporetto, A. Rendell declared that all the promises made to these countries were passé and indeed irrelevant. Knowing that there was a great deal of

resentment in Austria about the statements of the ex-Prime Minister Asquith, Rendell went on to argue that surely only good could come "by putting these things out of the Allied programme, whereby the friction and the unnecessary sense of grievance and doubt on the part of the Austrian people might as well be got rid of."(68) Even Runciman, who, who, as president of the Board of Trade, had been a member of the government that had signed the treaties, now distanced himself from "attempts to break up the Austrian Empire in the Italian interest."(69) The Radical members in particular attacked the blatant imperialist ambitions of the Italians and ventured to hope that the American President "would oppose dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire to satisfy Italy which was in flagrant violation of the principle of nationality by her extravagant claims in Dalmatia."(70)

Both Liberals and Conservatives had seriously embarrassed the government by their concerted attacks on Balfour's anti-Habsburg policy but, all the while, the bulk of public opinion remained unmoved, their criticism could only have a limited effect. Up until now the majority of the organized Labour movement had consistently supported government policy, as an inter-Allied Socialist Conference in London in 1915 had demonstrated. There the French section had declared its support for the Allied cause by saying that an Allied victory "must be the victory of the popular liberty, for unity, independence and autonomy of the nations in the peaceful Federation of the United States of Europe and the World."(71) This declaration, of course, by no means implied the destruction of the Monarchy since both 'autonomy' and 'independence' were mentioned and the ultimate desideratum of a peaceful European Federation could, at least in theory, be based upon a democratized and federalized Empire, as both Austrian Socialists like Karl Renner and Otto Bauer wanted. It had also been the vision of the pro-Habsburg Roumanian Federalist Auriel Popovici, and the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, too, that the creation of a federal structure for Austria-Hungary could lead on to greater things at the pan-European level. (vide Introduction Karl himself, too, had paid homage to this ideal with the project of a "United States of the Danubian Basin", as previously mentioned.(72)

Labour's entry into the Coalition Government under Lloyd

George ensuring continuing Labour support for the war and a plan for an international Socialist Conference to discuss the question of war aims advanced by the Independent Labour Party was subsequently turned down.(73) However, the impassioned appeal of the Russian revolutionaries soon changed the minds of the members of the Labour Executive and it was agreed to attend such a Conference to be held in Stockholm, in neutral Sweden. The leaders of the Labour Party sought to formulate a common agreement on both peace terms and war aims to which all socialist parties could subscribe. Drafted by Sidney Webb, one of the leading members of the Fabian Society, a declaration was composed basically reiterating the Society's 'Report on Peace Terms' of the previous year. This report had emphasized the need for certain territorial changes in East-Central Europe to assuage nationalist passions which, Webb argued, had been one of the principal causes of the war. Generally speaking, the Fabians were sympathetic to nationalist demands but they issued a caveat to the effect that "geographical and strategic requirements of other states needed to take precedence of nationalist aspirations." (74) This included, significantly, an outlet to the sea- and here Webb was almost certainly thinking of Hungary with Fiume and Austria with Trieste.

There was undoubtedly a degree of contradiction in Fabian thinking since they were very much in favour of large political entities which put them at cross purposes with the principle of nationality per se. Indeed, Ensor, for one argued that the best way to preserve peace was by creating a 'World Concert of Satisfied Great Powers' and, presumably, he would have argued that war had broken out because one of the existing Great Powers, i.e. Germany was 'dissatisfied', having been 'deprived of her place in the sun' in the Kaiser's memorable words(75) In Ensor's view any reduction in the number of Great Powers, especially to the advantage of smaller states was a disaster sans phrase.

However, somewhat at variance with this view, since he saw the Monarchy "as an obvious candidate for decay" by May 1915 he was arguing that "it was imperative to dismember the Monarchy by setting up Hungary and the Slav provinces of Austria as independent states" while adding South Germany in compensation to a Germanized Austria." (76) Another Fabian, Leonard Woolf, in contrast decisively rejected this idea and in his projected 'League of Nations' still counted Austria as one of the Great Powers.(77)

This general vagueness vis-à-vis the Habsburg Empire can also be seen from the August draft of the Labour Party in which there was no actual reference to the Monarchy per se but merely an appeal for "an authoritative International Conference to deal with a reorganisation of the Balkan peninsula. " This was to be enacted "on the basis of giving freedom to the people there to settle their own destinies irrespective of Austrian, Turkish or other foreign domination."(78)

Over the next few months, however, the Labour Programme was redrafted for adoption by the Special Joint Conference of the T.U.C. and the Labour Party in London in late December 1917.

Here, the I.L.P. and the British Socialist Party(B.S.P.) strongly criticized some provisions which they believed should have offered a direct alternative to the Allied Note to Wilson with its blatant anti-Habsburg stance. In fact, the B.S.P. organ 'The Call' was particularly critical of "the destructive aim" of the Note, saying:(79)

We submit that the dismemberment of Austria, the cession of Constantinople and the Straits to Russia, the satisfaction of the European demands of the Italian imperialists, the absorption of all Poland by Russia, the enlargement of Roumania are proposals that override the concept of nationality.(80)

The double standards and grotesque hypocrisy of the Allied governments could not have been delineated more clearly.

No organization was more vociferous in its denunciation of secret diplomact then the Union of Democratic Control, as has been seen in Chapter 7, and the I.L.P. adopted its programme of

opposition to imperialist conquests and forcible annexations almost verbatim. For the U.D.C. there was only one way to determine changes in political frontiers, whether the case were Alsace-Lorraine or the Trentino and that was by plebiscite, in which autonomy rather than complete independence should be considered first. As far as Austria-Hungary was concerned the U. D.C. viewed it as an essentially national state like any other and its political existence never challenged.

Prima facie, at any rate, when the question of British war aims came up for discussion again in the War Cabinet in early 1918, a more moderate stance than that of the previous January seemed to be in evidence. Assuredly, the Russian Bolshevik Revolution had exercised a powerful influence on the field of international diplomacy. A month after, on December 22nd, Leon

Trotsky, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs had proposed that every subject nationality should have the right to decide its own future by that very mechanism of a plebiscite, and on Christmas Day, Cernin, on behalf of the Central Powers, accepted the Soviet formula providing that all of Russia's allies did the same.(81) This, effectively, put the British government on the spot and Lloyd George, nolens volens, was forced to a restatement of war aims in public on a "less requisitive basis than the reply to Wilson a year ago." (82) For the British the most difficult article was the one demanding a referendum for national groups, to which the Central Powers had answered that "every state must deal with its people independently in a constitutional manner." (83) Despite general agreement with the statement that "every state had sovereignty over its own subjects", Hankey drafted a declaration on behalf of the Cabinet to the effect that there are exceptional cases "of people who are linked by ties of race, history, or language, more closely to other nations than to those under whose temporary allegiance they have fallen." (84) The reunion of such irredentas was a sine qua non for a just peace and this applied to the Trentino and possibly certain islands in the Adriatic; consequently any talk of referenda in cases like these was superfluous.

The final statement made an attempt to convince both the peoples of the Allied powers and of Austria-Hungary that the Entente had no intention of destroying the Monarchy but merely to ensure "the granting of equal rights to the subject nationalities (namely the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks and South Slavs) on par with the Magyars and Germans in the direction of Austro-Hungarian policy." (85)

Obviously with an eye to the American reaction, Cecil concluded, after demanding an independent Poland:

Similarly, though we agree with President Wilson that the break-up of Austria-Hungary is no part of our war aims, we feel that unless genuine self-government on true democratic principles is granted to those Austro-Hungarian peoples who have long deserved it, it is impossible to hope for the removal of those causes of unrest in that part of Europe which have so long threatened its general peace. (86)

All to the good, one might say- but the statement was not quite what it seemed. A discussion of the terms with the Allies was a priori ruled out as well as a direct answer to Czernin for this would imply an opening of negotiations. Although the Cabinet

and particularly Lloyd George were aware that the declaration was drafted in such a way as not to preclude some form of diplomatic understanding, this was not its *raison d'être*. While being partly a quasi public relations exercise, it was more important for Lloyd George- indeed- "essential that the statement should be a war move rather than a peace move." (87) A more graphic illustration of Lloyd George's 'Machiavellianism' it would be more difficult to imagine. Ostensibly "a peace move" his *arrière pensée* was that it should be the complete opposite. Evidently, Lloyd George's thinking was a reflection on what had happened in Russia during the last 18 months in which the Russian army had become progressively demoralized and paralysed; a similar scenario might very well be developing in Austria. Thus, a statement that Britain and the Entente allies did not wish to destroy the Monarchy "should make her people lukewarm in the war." In this way Austria could be prevented from deploying more of her forces against the Entente- specifically the transfer of over 300, 000 men to the Western Front after Russia's collapse. In some respects, however, Cecil even outshone- if that is the right word- Lloyd George, since the former argued that abandoning promises to Italy and Roumania could have serious military results, playing into the hands of pacifist elements in those two countries. Significantly too, he felt that Roumania might have an important role to play as a link to the anti-Bolshevik forces in Southern Russia. Cecil, for one, had not given up hope of a restitution of an Eastern Front by White Russian elements. Both the manoeuvrings of Lloyd George and Cecil were scarcely such as to inspire confidence with the Austrians, especially in view of Cecil's continuing reference "to the legitimate claims of the Italians and Roumanians", which made it abundantly clear that come what may, Austria-Hungary would still be expected to sacrifice territory. (88)

When the War Cabinet came to discuss Smuts's mission and Czernin's speech, it was virtually agreed that Smuts should go to Switzerland again and have a personal *tête-à-tête* with Czernin himself, as Mensdorff had suggested. (89) Balfour's initial caveat if a Cabinet member were seen "to confabulate with an Austrian Prime Minister" without Allied approval, going beyond the mandate received in Paris "for informal conversations", was countered by

Bonar Law's gaining Clemenceau's agreement. Mensdorff had reported to Czernin that he thought, on balance, that the talks with Smuts had been useful but merely "le premier jalon." Given his prewar experience as ambassador in London, he felt, however, a note of caution was necessary, saying:

I can only repeat again and again that the English are past masters in the art of dropping something which has proved impracticable, but that they will never condescend to explicitly giving up a declaration which they have once made.(90)

-And the January Allied Note was definitely a case in point. "This infamous action by England" still clouded Czernin's thinking and he seriously wondered whether the British move was principally governed by the desire to gain information about Austria's present military capacity- which, given Lloyd George's previous remarks, was scarcely surprising. The Austrians were surely right to be wary about any diplomatic moves in which Lloyd George was involved, since, while the Austrian agent Skrzyński in a memorandum to the Balhausplatz concluded that the British probably wanted an agreement that included Germany as well as Austria, nevertheless:

The English must proceed slowly and cautiously, since they have to consider our, partly justified, idee fixe that one merely wanted a separate peace with us. They only wanted to continue these conversations, if they were convinced that they could be- for the time being- kept secret and conducted without commitment, thus not affecting the combativeness of the Entente peoples.(91)

The British government was in fact far removed from 'accepting a draw' as the result of the war but even Lloyd George was sanguine enough to realize that Germany could scarcely be expected to surrender Alsace-Lorraine and her colonies for no discernible quid pro quo. In fact, true to form, the British Prime Minister was actively considering "paying Germany in the East in order to square them in the West"-i.e. at Soviet Russia's expense.(92)

The reactions of the Viennese press to the discussions in the War Cabinet in early 1918 were scathing in the extreme. The semi-official Fremdenblatt- effectively Czernin's mouthpiece- thanked Lloyd George profusely for "so graciously promising not to destroy Austria-Hungary but merely wishing to cut off enormous tracts of territory." It noted too, sarcastically that "the right of self-determination" was only to apply to the Central Powers

and not to be demanded of the Entente- least of all Britain. This was, the Fremdenblatt concluded "the latest invention of British hypocrisy."(93)

The paper also condemned "the blatant attempt" to interfere in the internal affairs of the Empire by "internationalising her domestic problems", saying that only a British Prime Minister "could have the gall to speak as a conqueror would have done with a public programme which was nothing less than a peace of annihilation."(94)

In vain did Skrzyński attempt to put a gloss on these remarks by saying they were by no means representative of government thinking but merely a reflection of the fact that a substantial section of the Viennese press was in the pay of the arms industry. The Acting- Foreign Secretary was evidently not impressed by this argument and merely rejoined that he doubted the bona fides of the communication as a whole. Cecil was particularly suspicious of the alleged claim that Czernin "saw some hopeful elements in the recent comments by Lloyd George" and thought it more probable that Austria and her German ally were trying to make Italy believe that "the British were ready to sell her to Austria."(95) Sonnino, the Italian Foreign Minister had in fact already voiced his suspicions in this respect about Lloyd George when the latter had criticized "the unreasonableness of Italian demands."(96) Sonnino was not averse to believing anything about the British Prime Minister.

In contrast to the Foreign Office, the War Cabinet's inclination was, nevertheless, to investigate the possibility of finding some form of modus vivendi with certain moderate elements in the Central Powers. A view, which was now shared- mirabile dictu- even by one of the most intransigent believers in complete military victory- General Haig. (One of the so-called 'Never Endians.') Given the ever increasing financial and economic burdens of the war, Haig now doubted whether the continuation of the war was likely to bring any further benefits. After all, Britain and her Empire-Commonwealth allies had already gained control of Germany's colonies and, therefore, ad maiorem gloriam imperii Britanniae, he declared:

Our best policy is to strengthen Austria against Germany, and the latter in the direction of Russia for the future. Thus she would be taken off the path of the British Empire and would bump up against the greatest military obstacles.(97)

When Orlando, the Italian Premier, arrived in London to effectively remonstrate with Lloyd George over the Smuts-Mensdorff negotiations, since one of the conditions of Italy's accession to the Entente was 'no separate peace'- Lloyd George is reported to have said that "England does not repudiate treaties", (98), implying that the Treaty of London still stood. Orlando was quick to respond by saying that he hoped this indeed were the case, but this was certainly at variance with what the British Prime Minister had said to the T.U.C. Conference in which he had openly questioned the Italian claims. To this Lloyd George answered that this was merely a war strategem. This explanation was scarcely convincing to Orlando's mind but he, nevertheless, reluctantly sanctioned a continuation of the talks between Austria and Britain. It has to be emphasized once again that given the chameleon nature of Lloyd George, no-one, least of all his colleagues, knew at times quite what to believe. Really, his policy was 'as the person was'- a kind of modification of Wittgenstein's aphorism: 'the world is as the case is.' It was a question of whom the Prime Minister was talking to at the time and what impression he wanted to give.

At this juncture, the Central Powers had decided on a public answer to Lloyd George and President Wilson, whose celebrated 'Fourteen Points' had followed 3 days after the T.U.C. speech in late December. Since the American President was not bound by the secret treaties, whose terms he was known to disapprove of, it was to these 'Points' that Hertling, the German Foreign Minister and Czernin chose to reply on January 24th. (99)

Interestingly, Lloyd George said he was not opposed to Austro-American conversations, as Skrzyński had indicated too, since "it was easier for Austria to make peace with the U.S.A. owing to the large number of Austrian subjects in that country." (100) Although the British Foreign Office as a whole had given up the prospects of a separate peace, Lloyd George thought that such conversations might very well impede the deployment of troops to the Western Front and/or until a revolution à la russe had broken out in Austria. Lloyd George was in fact more and more convinced that given the internal stress created by the war such a revolution was bound to break out. This Weltanschauung gravely dismayed Mensdorff, who now suspected that all the Prime Minister's manoeuvrings, were indeed based upon this underlying leitmotif. (101) Lloyd George had in fact been paying assiduous attention to the

intelligence reports of such agents as Horodyski who had given graphic accounts of increasing seditious incidents within the Monarchy and not just palpable signs of war-weariness.

In the meantime, Karl had sent a message (almost certainly scripted by Czernin) to the American President, declaring that Austria was prepared to offer as peace terms practically the status quo ante. Wilson responded by asking his special representative Colonel House to gauge Balfour's opinion since previous unofficial conversations between his confidant Professor Herron and the Austrian Professor Lammasch "had seemed to offer more in harmony with the principles laid down by the President"- i.e. taking account of 'the nationality principle.' In his reply on February 27th, Balfour once again adopted a highly negative stance, saying that Lammarsch's comments had been 'unofficial' and while they probably accurately reflected the Emperor's opinion at the time, uninfluenced by Germany, nevertheless, it was au fin the official proposal by Czernin that mattered. Here, Balfour said, were two main objections: Italy's claims were totally ignored and the phrase "self-government for the nationalities" too vague a formula. Moreover, when the Supreme War Council came to review Czernin's declaration and a similar one by Hertling at Versailles on February 2nd, Lloyd George seemed less concerned with Italy's demands (Sonnino felt that Italy had been placed in the shade) than "making it quite clear to Germany and Austria that the real barrier to peace was the aggressive and unrepentant military caste." (102) Thus, peace could not be assured until this caste had been overthrown. Lloyd George was a past master at changing tack and argument when he believed the occasion warranted it. If the Prime Minister was not in modern parlance demanding 'regime change' as the sine qua non for peace, it was evidently 'caste change' that he had in mind. Balfour, however, returned to the main point as he saw it: upholding Allied commitments:

The future of the war largely depends on supporting Italian enthusiasm and in maintaining the anti-German zeal of the Slav population in Austria. (103)

Balfour seemed to be acutely worried that President Wilson was likely to prove "too kind-hearted" where Austria was concerned and both Smuts and Lloyd George were equally wary of entrusting "British and the Empire's interest to the United States." To be fair to Balfour one might argue that he believed

that Austrian statesmen might very well utilize Wilson's reluctance to get too involved with the internal affairs of the Monarchy to convince the Slav peoples that whatever they might hope to gain from the Entente they certainly would not get it from America.

Balfour was also anxious about any publicity being drawn to contacts with Austria, and thus was greatly disturbed by the details revealed in the French journal 'Justice' after Smuts's return from Switzerland. Both Smuts and Mensdorff were acutely embarrassed by the questions that were subsequently raised in the House of Commons, with Smuts declaring in a speech in Glasgow on May 17th:

I deeply regret these disclosures because it seems to me that if the war is to come to a close, ultimately it will be necessary from time to time to get in touch with one another
(105)

A.F. Whyte (106) accused Balfour of trying to suborn Austria from her alliance with Germany by offering her a slice of German territory (Silesia, Bavaria etc.) in exchange- which was not Balfour's intention at all.(106)

However, against the strong opposition of the Foreign Office the War Cabinet decided to send Philip Kerr to Switzerland to keep open a channel of communication especially in view of the concern that Russia and the Central Powers were obviously moving towards a separate peace.(107) Since Germany seemed determined to present the Entente with a fait accompli at Brest-litovsk by exerting a powerful economic hold of countries like the Ukraine now detached from Russia the War Cabinet concluded that the only card that could be played to prevent such a development was some form of modus vivendi with Austria-Hungary. Smuts, for one, was convinced that Germany's Mitteleuropa plans were no longer "an idea but a reality." More ominously, too, he added, the route overland to Britain's Asiatic possessions, especially India, was effectively opening to her. This new situation required a new strategy:

If we cannot defeat Central Europe we must break it by far-sighted and daring diplomacy. The break up of Russia has given us diplomatically a free hand..The principal feature of my idea is still, as foreshadowed by Mensdorff to detach Austria from Germany either before or after the peace, by holding out to her the prospect of a large increase in territory and position.(108)

In Smuts's view the Monarchy should not only be given control of Poland but the Ukraine too, although as a quid pro quo she should be expected to cede Bosnia and Herzegovina together with a portion of Damatia to Serbia. Also, she would have to surrender the Trention and some other minor territory to Italy. Quite breathtaking in its conception this was a vivid demonstration once more of the willingness of British and Imperial statesmen to barter away other peoples' countries in the interests of the British Empire; naturally, Germany's ally, Turkey could not be 'squared' in the same way since British interests in Armenia and the Caucasus- particularly the Baku oil-fields- would be adversely affected, and the Germans in their turn could play that card against Britain. Smuts also suggested 'buying off' 'Foxy Ferdinand' of Bulgaria with Constantinople, which had, formerly, of course, been promised to Russia. In this way, Smuts calculated, the German chain in Central Europe would be broken at three points with Austria, Greater Serbia and Greater Bulgaria "on more or less national lines." Germany's allies would thus become independent of her and indeed hostile to her, compelling Germany "to come to terms with the Entente and so a favourable and durable peace could be concluded." (109)

Given his prominence the Austrophobes and the 'Never-Endians' - i.e. those who believed in complete victory at all cost- hesitated to attack him directly but did so, indirectly, saying that he was merely carrying out "the tortuous diplomacy of Lord Milner", which was solely focused on Imperial concerns to the detriment of Britain's allies. In the Commons, A.A. Lynch led the attack, declaring:

Lord Milner's dream of diplomacy is to detach Austria from her alliance and thus rebuff or disappoint or produce lack of faith in all those who seek emancipation from Austrian rule, and who, if the occasion offered, would become the allies of the Entente powers. (110)

However, when Milner's associate Kerr, was nominated to go to Switzerland he was, noticeably, not given any authority to commit Britain to any particular policy and Balfour, as usual, was highly sceptical of the whole mission, especially of anything Czernin had to say. This, even though Czernin had more or less promised to make a formal declaration to the effect that "Austria

would only discuss her own affairs" in any conversations with Britain, America and her Allies.(111)(The possibility of a separate peace, in other words.)

All three personages- Smuts, Milner and Kerr- were now convinced that both the Emperor Karl and the Foreign Minister Czernin were now more determined than they had been a year ago to bring the war to an end as soon as possible, without necessarily including Germany in a general peace. It was not exactly a question of 'sauve qui peut' but given the increasingly serious internal condition of the Monarchy close to it. Not only fear of internal revolution and national revolt but also fear of her ally Germany itself that had dominated the peace negotiations with Russia, rejecting Austria's attempts at more moderate terms, had propelled the Empire to an accomodating stance. Added to which was the return of many prisoners of war openly admiring the revolution that they had seen in Russia.

On March 14th Kerr finally met Skrzyński in Berne. Apparently, Czernin had issued the Austrian agent with a caveat in advance to the effect that he suspected the Allies of "un mauvais jeu", especially in view of Lloyd George's ostensible support for the mission in private while remaining silent in public. Czernin had in fact hesiaied for some 10 days before giving his limited assent to the talks and then on the strict understanding that Skrzyński was only authorized to listen to what Kerr had to say. What Kerr actually had to say was that:

The British government was not seeking to manoeuvre Austria-Hungary out of the war on any sort of terms simply as a move against Germany.(112)

However, that was precisely what Czernin thought the British government- in particular Lloyd George- was trying to do. The actual term 'separate peace' was scrupulously avoided as was the case with the meeting between Smuts and Mensdorff but the *arrière pensée* was definitely there. Skrzyński was optimistic enough to believe that the British government would say that "while not raising the question of a separate peace, it thought that a discussion of the questions outstanding between Austria-Hungary and the Entente would be useful."(113) Significantly, Kerr declined to make such a statement since he had been

formally instructed to limiting himself to that very question of a separate peace and did not consider it "politic" to pretend otherwise. Czernin doubted the sincerity of the British once more and instructed Skrzyński to reject Kerr's criticism of the treaty with Roumania and to demand that France and Italy renounce all claims on both Austrian and German territory. As long as Britain supported these claims, Czernin declared, it was obvious that Britain did not really want peace but was seeking to drive a wedge between the two Central Powers. The Foreign Office, for its part, came to the conclusion that "Czernin was being unreliable"(114) and that the Austrian Minister was waiting upon the result of the great German offensive in the West. Austria's statesmen were reluctantly concluding that, *faute de mieux*, they had little choice but to pin their hopes on a German victory.

Since the Central Powers had initiated the discussion on peace, the Allied governments found themselves in somewhat of a diplomatic quandry when examining 'the Austrian problem.' While propounding the 'liberation of peoples' on the basis of 'the principle of nationality' they had blatantly violated their own point d'appui by the secret Treaty of London. Although not published until the Soviet government came to power, many of its provisions were widely known, and, paradoxically, as a result of this flagrant hypocrisy, Italy's entry into the war, instead of dealing the Monarchy 'a death blow', as Lloyd George anticipated, this merely served to revitalize her. Croats, Slovenes and Serbs had no desire to see their lands pass under the control of Italy. The Croatian regiments on the Italian front in particular fought all the harder. Bitter memories on both sides were kept alive by the remembrance of the fact that it was 'i Croati'(the Croats) that had helped the Austrian general Radetsky crush the Italian revolution in 1848-49- as with Hungary too.

The theoretical basis for a united federal Yugoslav state had been laid down on July 20th 1917, when the Serbian Premier Pašić and the Croatian leader Trumbić had signed the so-called 'Pact of Corfu' where the Serbian government was in exile. This declaration demanded "the inclusion of all territory completely inhabited by South Slavs into the new kingdom", converting the

Adriatic into "a free and open sea." (115) Such demands, of course, implied not only the nullification of the Treaty of London but also the de facto dissolution of the Habsburg Empire--or at least its serious dismemberment. Shorn of its southern Slav provinces, if the Empire survived, it would be, as Franz Ferdinand feared, reduced to the level of a third rate power. Shortly after the declaration representatives of the Allied powers at a conference in Paris assured the Slavs ~~that~~ "they were resolved not to lay down arms until they had rendered impossible a return of the criminal aggression of the Central Powers who alone bore the responsibility for the conflict." (116) For Steed and Seton-Watson this meant 'Austria delenda est', as they had hoped.

However, while Lloyd George gave a fulsome speech in Pašić's favour when the latter came to London on August 8th, in private, Lloyd George was decidedly more anxious to appease Italy and Sonnino made it abundantly clear that Italy was determined to control the Adriatic and not to abandon any of her claims. (117) It was completely in vain that Steed declared that the hardest blow that Italy could deliver against Austria would be for Orlando and Sonnino to announce that they had reached an agreement with the South Slavs as the basis of her whole programme for liberating the Habsburg peoples. (118)

Although some of the Italians that Steed spoke to were beginning to see- in his words- "that there is no middle course between the salvation of Austria and a thorough agreement with Serbia and the South Slavs" (119) he finally drew the conclusion that these Italian diplomats were merely acting tactically. Thus, he warned that "if Italy did not help to create Yugoslavia it would be created without her, either by the Austrians or by a future Balkan Confederation." (120)

The disaster of Caporetto in October 1917 brought home forcibly to the Italians that the need for some kind of rapprochement with the South Slavs was undeniable. When it 'came to the crunch' many Slavs evidently preferred the 'devil they knew', as the battle itself vividly demonstrated. Caporetto, there was no gainsaying it, was a crushing defeat that threatened not only to open the road to Venice but even Rome. In London the representative of the Italian General Staff, General Mola met with various South Slav representatives at Steed's house

in mid-December and admitted that in view of the defeat, the elimination of Russia and President Wilson's statement about nationality, Italy definitely needed to review the situation. He curtly rejected the "everything or nothing" position of the South Slavs but said he was minded to reconsider the claim to the Dalmatian hinterland but still demanded Trieste, Pola and Istria which Trumbić also claimed. In spite of their well-known enthusiasm for the South Slavs, both Steed and Seton-Watson were at this juncture willing to make concessions to "Italy's quest for security" as long as Italy would agree to the formation of a Yugoslav state and the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy. Steed was completely mesmerized by the project of a "united front" of all the anti-Habsburg forces to destroy Austria-Hungary completely. Steed did in fact succeed in persuading the Premier Orlando to make a speech in the Chamber of Deputies on January 27th "in favour of the subject nationalities and against the yoke of racial domination." (121) This speech, he was gratified to learn met "with the sympathetic approval of the responsible factors in England-i.e. Lloyd George, Balfour and the Foreign Office. Steed then attempted with Orlando's support to persuade the Foreign Minister Sonnino "to follow a frank policy of liberation and liberal encouragement and protection" vis-à-vis the Austro-Hungarian nationalities which, at a stroke would gain Italy "il primato morale of the Allies in Europe." In any case Steed argued the Treaty of London was simply untenable. (123)

Sonnino was not, however, to be moved, but there was a positive development, as far as Steed was concerned. The "so-called "forces of movement" such as the Italian Social Democratic Irredentists met in Paris together with Socialists and Syndicalists from Serbia, Poland and Roumania and publicly declared that "the existence of the Habsburg Empire was incompatible with the right of self-determination." (124) In contrast to this, however, an inter-Allied Socialist Conference in London between 20-24th February, chaired by Sidney Webb and Albert Thomas, issued a memorandum that rejected "as a war-aim

the dismemberment of the Monarchy or its deprivation of economic access to the sea."(125)

That being said they, nevertheless, went on to declare that the claims of the nationalities such as the Czecho-slovaks and the Yugoslavs should be adjudicated by a future League of Nations such as the Americans had proposed. This was certainly in advance of the British Labour statement of December 1917. National independence should be thus granted to

such peoples as demand it and those communities ought to have the opportunity of determining their own groupings and federations according to their affinities and interests. If they think fit they are free to substitute a free federation of Danubian states for the Austro-Hungarian Empire.(126)

Socialists still had their doubts about the economic and political viability of any new states that might arise out of the corpus delicti of the Monarchy but were persuaded that their economic needs could be adequately catered for in a federation or a confederation.

The Times and New Europe alike welcomed the declaration which seemed to provide a favourable background for the projected Italo-Yugoslav talks- the sine qua non in Steed's view for a successful offensive against the Monarchy and indeed its destruction. In late February an Italian 'Parliamentary Committee for the Union of All Subject Races of Austria-Hungary' was founded, and as a result of an informal conference between its delegate, Andrea Torre, and members of the South Slav Committee, the so-called Pact of Rome was signed on March 7th. Witnessed by both Steed and Seton-Watson, translations of its contents were sent to Drummond, Balfour and Cecil. The agreement forthrightly declared "the imprescriptible right to full political and economic independence for every nationality" and condemned the Habsburg Monarchy as the fundamental obstacle to such a goal.(127)

The advocates of the Monarchy's disruption received a practical stimulus by a wave of social and political unrest that culminated a mass strikes in January 1918. This was followed by the 'Epiphany Declaration' of the Czech parliamentary deputies demanding wide democratic reforms, seconded by powerful socialist protests in the streets of Vienna and other major cities. Almost

certainly the main impetus was given by the economic and social hardship occasioned by the seemingly endless war and the demands for democratic reform did not challenge directly, in the main, the basic integrity of the Monarchy— indeed autonomy or 'Home Rule' was the major consideration here.

Within the Foreign Office itself, though, there was still a degree of support for erecting a strong Austria as a barrier against a powerful Germany, as well as now, a potentially 'dangerous' Soviet Russia in the future. The possible 'contagion' of not only an anti-imperialist but also an anti-capitalist revolution from Russia was to become an increasingly important factor in the calculations of Western statesmen such as Churchill, for example, who advocated 'crushing the Bolshevik chickens while they were still in the Bolshevik eggs.' Others weighed the pros and cons of inciting a revolutionary nationalist agendum which the more cautious elements in the Foreign Office saw running the risk of playing the role of the Sorcerer's Apprentice, unleashing forces they could no longer control.

From Paris, Count Sobanski forwarded a memorandum of the Polish National Committee urging a militant campaign against Germany by inciting the Monarchy's subject nationalities to this very revolt. However, Gregory in an extensive minute for the Foreign Office, urged caution, saying that he personally doubted "the trustworthiness" of the "professional agitators" who claimed to speak for the majority of their peoples from "the safe haven of emigration." He concluded with the words:

We may in fact have legitimate doubts as to how far all the peoples of the Dual Monarchy are thirsting for emancipation from the Habsburg yoke. Privilege and autonomy are evidently all they desire; but whether other than the Poles and perhaps the Czechs the majority are anxious for complete independence has still to be proved. (128)

Clerk, for his part, was more strongly in favour of the proposal and advised that "they should do all to encourage disruptive tendencies." (129)

New Europe was particularly alarmed at the occasional appearances of such phrases as "autonomous development" and "self-determination" in speeches of Lloyd George (and, of course, Wilson) since this represented in its view a marked degree of 'back-sliding.' Thus, The Times queried:

Indeed, the real test of any scheme of democratic self-government for the peoples of the Monarchy..will be the attitude of the Germans and Magyars towards it, for it is their artificial hegemony, built up in the interest of Prussian domination, that any honest scheme of self-determination for the Habsburg peoples would threaten.(130)

Steed, of course, was more convinced than ever that the

Dual System could not be broken within the confines of the Monarchy and, therefore, any moderate statements could only have a "demoralizing effect and apt to disconcert some tried friends of the Allies."(131) Any possibility of an inconclusive peace was Steed's *bête noire*, since this would rule out the overthrow of Germany's dominant position in East-Central Europe and Austria-Hungary's preservation and subservience to it. In his goal of opposing any attempt "to save Austria", Steed was able to enlist the powerful support of Lord Northcliffe who was appointed Director of Propaganda in enemy countries on February 7th, which was to remain independent of the Ministry of Information. For this formidable newspaper proprietor and arch-imperialist Steed's argument that "the struggle 'to save Austria' is at the bottom of the whole pacifist and defeatist campaign in Allied Countries"(132) was sufficient to convince Northcliffe that it was essential

To try to break the power of Austria-Hungary, as the weakest link in the chain of enemy states, by supporting and encouraging all anti-German and pro-Ally peoples and tendencies.(133)

A memorandum to this effect was subsequently presented to Balfour (specifically drawn by Steed at Northcliffe's wish) and on February 26th Balfour commented:

A propaganda for the subject nationalities was right whether the complete break-up of the Austrian Empire or its de-Germanization under Habsburg rule be the final goal of our efforts.(134)

Although Balfour mentioned the option of "de-Germanization" the leitmotif was effectively "the complete break-up." Given that the Habsburg government had despatched several units to the Western Front to support Germany's March offensive the British War Cabinet authorized Steed on his visit to the Italian Front to utilize the term "independence" in his appeal to the large number of Transylvanian Roumanians, Carniolan Slovenes and

Croats stationed there in order to heighten dissension and inhibit the transfer of more units to the Western Front. The Cabinet also authorized Steed to declare that any proclamation of independence by the various National Committees of their respective territories would receive the full endorsement of the Entente powers. All in all, it could now be said that the Rubicon had been crossed and 'alea est jacta.'

This responsibility for formenting anti-Habsburg propaganda naturally placed a formidable weapon in the hands of the enemies of the Monarchy. If officialdom had any reservations about the course of action now to be followed, Crewe House, where the propaganda department was housed, was in a unique position to influence events in such a way that New Europe's desideratum of complete independence rather than just autonomy would gain unqualified recognition. For Steed and Seton-Watson the policy of disruption was a means to the Monarchy's dismemberment and not just an emergency war-time measure *faute de mieux*.

The ideological and practical preparation for the coming anti-Habsburg campaign were initially co-ordinated at an inter-Allied propaganda conference in London at the end of February and then elaborated at the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities convened in Rome from April 8th to 11th.(135) Here the various *émigré* organisations agreed on three major resolutions: viz. 1) The right of every nationality to attain full political and economic independence. 2) Condemnation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy "as the instrument of German domination" and 3) Joint action against the common Habsburg enemy. (In this respect an agreement between the Italians and the Yugoslavs was particularly welcomed.) (136) However, a caveat needs to be issued in this connection, since, although the Italian Minister of War Propaganda sent the Congress a message of sympathy, the government as such declined to recognize the Congress officially.

Although Seton-Watson remained very much *persona non grata* with the Italian government through his vehement denunciation of the treaty of Rome, thanks to Steed and Northcliffe's intervention at the Foreign Office, their initial compliance with the Italian ambassador's request that Seton-Watson be prevented from going was rescinded. All the principal participants were

received, as a conciliatory gesture, by the Italian Premier, Orlando, and both Steed and Seton-Watson could be satisfied with the fact that the Habsburg government would be seriously alarmed by the Allied governments declaring their quasi-official support for a campaign aiming at the Monarchy's disruption. Indeed, the very presence of Steed and Seton-Watson at the Congress caused considerable consternation at home and the Radical M.P. J. King demanded to know whether "these British delegates" were "attending as representatives of the government." King was, in fact, convinced that the Foreign Office was smiling benignly on their appearance, and his suspicions scarcely allayed when neither the government nor the Foreign Office were prepared to give a direct answer. None of the Radical members of parliament were willing to give credence to Steed's *apologia pro vita sua* that "he was only in attendance as an Englishman who knows something about Austria and the Austrian subject races" but he "represented only himself." (138)

The Austro-Hungarian government was indeed decidedly alarmed by the Congress and by the appearance of two of its most inveterate foes, Steed and Seton-Watson. It, too, was not convinced that the British government was not in tacit sympathy with them. Czernin was particularly 'miffed' by "the activities of the rebellious nationalities" singling out "the wretched Masaryk for special opprobrium, whom he, reluctantly admitted had considerable support in the Czech lands." (139) In spite of Balfour's official and public distancing of the British government from the Congress's resolutions, Czernin was reinforced in his belief that the dominant view now held by Britain was that the Empire was indeed on the brink of collapse, as Lloyd George surmized. Thus, nothing could be gained by attempting to negotiate with her. (140) (En passant, one might add that, according to Pichon, Balfour had actually supported the anti-Habsburg resolutions; be that as it may, he certainly agreed with Steed's formula for the propaganda to be waged amongst the Slav troops on the Italian Front.) (141)

However, in all fairness, it must be mentioned, that a crucial fact that Czernin failed to mention, was the unfavourable

effect of the annexationist peace treaties with Russia and the Ukraine and the preliminary peace treaty with Roumania, which seriously undermined those elements within the Foreign Office that still sought to detach Austria from Germany, Czernin himself had tried to persuade the Germans to moderate the harsh terms, but they were adamant, and the Austrian Minister had been forced to give way. There was no doubt who was 'the leading violin' in the orchestra of the Central Powers-a fact, which, of course, had been true for a long time- hence the Kaiser's pre-war paternalistic remark about "Austria being the brilliant second on the duelling ground."

Apart from this, Czernin's negative response to the British and American feelers was compounded by claim\$ that Clemenceau, the French Prime Minister had sought peace negotiations through a reopening of the Armand-Revertera talks in early February.(142) Clemenceau had categorically denied this claiming that, on the contrary, the initiative had come from the Austrian side. When Czernin then attempted to blame the French Premier for the breakdown of the talks, Clemenceau retaliated by revealing the secret of the Imperial letter in the Sixtus affair of March 1917. (143) The result of this controversy between Czernin and Clemenceau was, in Balfour's words, "that the French have now destroyed any chance of Allied negotiations with the Austrian Emperor." (144)

Clemenceau's action and the avalanche of acrimony that it brought in its wake led to Czernin's resignation and the Emperor Karl's humiliation at Spa where he was called to order by his German ally and forced to disavow any further negotiations for a separate peace. All this was effectively 'grist to the mill' of all the anti-Habsburg factions that had condemned all attempts at a rapprochement with Austria in order to find a modus vivendi. These elements were now given more or less carte blanche to work for the dissolution of the Monarchy without fearing any further manoeuvring on the part of Austrophile diplomats. Moreover, New Europe's agendum of 'Austria delenda est' was greatly facilitated by an important administrative change. Balfour's admiration for the Information Bureau of the War Office was such that in February 1918 he asked the Cabinet to have the staff transferred to the Foreign

1918. "The Foreign Office objected since he wanted them for

Office but then Beaverbrook objected because he wanted them for his Ministry of Information and as a result they all collectively resigned and were finally recruited to the Foreign Office as the Political Intelligence Department.(P.I.D.)(145)

Headed by William Tyrell, its members consisted of J. W. Headlam Morley, Sir Lewis Namier, A.J. Toynbee, E. Bevin and the Leper brothers, to which reference was briefly mentioned in Chapter VII. This organisation was an extremely powerful addition to the Austrophobe lobby in Britain and, after the government had decided on the Monarchy's destruction, the people whose advice the government invariably followed, since they represented the only body of opinion as to exactly how this could be achieved. From now on all despatches and documents vis-à-vis the Monarchy passed through the P.I.D. and thus gave William Tyrell and the others the means to delineate policy as they saw fit. The P.I.D. continued the work of the I.B. of the D.I, which had formerly been staffed by Namier and the Lepper brothers, in providing the Foreign Office with regular memoranda on the latest events in both Austria-Hungary and Germany. As far as 'The Habsburg Policy' was concerned the P.I.D. argued that whatever the Emperor's personal feelings might be and this included his reputed sympathy for the Slavs like his assassinated uncle, he could not abrogate the constitution which gave the Germans and the Magyars their dominant role in the Empire. Arguably, he made un grand faux pas after the death of Franz Joseph in November 1916 when a brief window of opportunity was opened, by swearing allegiance to the Hungarian constitution immediately, when he could have postponed this act for several months, giving himself at least a breathing-space to consider other possible constitutional arrangements. This unnecessarily premature act dashed the hopes of Hungary's Slav and Roumanian populations. The fact of the matter was, the P.I.D. argued:

The aspirations of the Czechs and South Slavs were not incompatible with the interests of the Habsburg dynasty but were incompatible with the national programme of the Germans and Magyars.(146)

Given that the German and Magyar ruling élites would never tolerate any attempt to break away from the alliance with Germany, since, as Count Tisza for one had graphically put it, "the Slavs are our danger, the Germans our shield and buckler", the only alternative was to destroy the Empire by encouraging

the various nationalities to demand nothing less than complete independence. The P.I.D. was also anxious to ensure that the government rejected the reform programme of the radical Magyar count, Michael Károlyi and a certain section of the Hungarian Independence Party for fear that this might "alienate the only straightforward enemies of Germany within the Monarchy- the Slavs," (147)

By the autumn of 1918 there was no gainsaying it, Crewe House in conjunction with the P.I.D. had gained complete control over British policy vis-à-vis the Habsburg Empire. At Steed's suggestion, Seton-Watson was now seconded by Northcliffe to work in the Austrian section of the propaganda department "being a thoroughly reliable man and the best official expert on Austria-Hungary." (148)- Thus, the former advisers had now become the official experts and the effective executioners of the Habsburg Empire.

In Northcliffe's view, "Austria might now fall to pieces after the failure of the Western Offensive" (149) and Stanthorpe of the Supreme War Council (S.W.C.) argued that if an intensive propaganda campaign were carried out, he seriously doubted whether "the Austro-Hungarian army could hold the line" since "agents belonging to these nationalities within the Empire would succeed in disorganizing the army units." (150)

On April 28th, Northcliffe wrote to Lloyd George saying that "although no binding assurance has been given" he had the agreement of both the Cabinet and the Foreign Office to a "definite policy of liberation of the Habsburg subject races with a view to their constitution, in the event of an Allied victory into a non-German Polity, or Danubian Confederation." (151) (But then, one might say, 'a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse,')

What the Spa meeting between the two Germanic Emperors ultimately entailed was an even closer bond between Germany and Austria, which once again, from the Monarchy's point of view, was *faute de mieux*. Austria's room for manoeuvre was even more circumscribed and there seemed no alternative to accept her role of second fiddle at the best in Germany's Mitteleuropa schemata.

There seems little doubt that Karl, personally, regretted this deeply. However, since 'the Slavization of the Empire' had evidently proved impossible, the Germans had decidedly the whip-hand in determining an unequivocal pro-German policy in Austria "to the extent", The Times commented, "that they were ready to crush any apprehended risings in Bohemia and amongst the Southern Slavs."(152)

Thus, whatever residual hopes the British government might have entertained about detaching Austria from her German ally proved illusory, but then they were not really very realistic since the British chose not to give her a verifiable and guaranteed quid pro quo, whereas Germany did. Indeed, as pointed out in the Introduction, German historians like Gerhard Ritter have quite plausibly argued, the preservation of Austria as a political entity was the main reason Germany went to war in the first place.

Cecil now declared that "the best plan was to give all possible support to the oppressed nationalities in their struggle against German-Magyar domination."(153) On May 22nd, a day later, Cecil spoke at a meeting commemorating the 3rd anniversary of Italy's entry into the war and attempted to defuse the considerable criticism being levelled at the government by numerous Austrophile elements by saying:

People talk sometimes of the dismemberment of Austria. I have no weakness for Austria; but I venture to think that is the wrong point of view. The true way to regard this problem is not the dismemberment of Austria, but the liberation of the populations subject to her rule. We are anxious to see all these peoples in the enjoyment of full liberty and independence.(154)

Crewe House was particularly encouraged by a personal letter of thanks from Lloyd George who called his anti-Austrian propaganda "admirable work."(155)

The question of a collective Allied declaration by Britain and France was then discussed with Pichon commenting:

All thought of a separate peace was now over. We need trouble no more to 'ménager l'Autriche' Therefore the Allies should now use every means to make difficulties for the Austrian Front.(156)

In this policy, however, there were some continuing setbacks,

Thus, at an Allied Conference in June at Versailles the proposal to formally recognize Yugoslav aspirations was thwarted by the predictable objections of the Italian Foreign Minister, Sonnino--much to Steed's chagrin.(157) Italy's objections to the creation of an independent Yugoslav state were long standing, as has been seen. Events, nevertheless seemed to play into the hands of the anti-Habsburg forces with reports from Crewe House that a large number of troops on the Piave Front in Northern Italy had abandoned their lines and the Austrian authorities had been compelled to despatch special machine-gun sections to carry out what were euphemistically called "special duties" to "divisions consisting of Slav troops." The actual battle at Piave between June 15th and 24th ended with a striking victory for the Italians with many Slav troops actually having crossed the lines with anti-Habsburg propaganda in their pockets. Many undoubtedly surrendered out of sheer war-weariness but the very fact that they were carrying such material was indicative of the success of the propaganda campaign.

Count Burián, Czernin's successor at the Ballhausplatz, was forced to point out at a Crown Council meeting on May 30th that this propaganda was having a decidedly corrosive effect on the morale of the South Slavs in particular, both at the front and behind the lines. The efficacy of the British propaganda campaign was later explicitly acknowledged by the official Austrian history of the war when it said:

An extraordinary dangerous weapon, perfectly employed, diminished the spirit of the Austro-Hungarian army at the front from the days of the Rome Congress.(158)

Both Northcliffe and Lloyd George declared that the campaign had been well and truly vindicated by the Italian victory at the Piave and 60% of the South Slav population were now sympathetic to the cause of the Entente. That was probably an exaggeration but there was no denying the important part it played in undermining morale.(159)

Lloyd George also singled out for praise those soldiers who had come over to the Allied side in Siberia. These were Austrians

of Czech origin who were formed into the so-called 'Czech Legion' on the initiative of émigré politicians and who ultimately seized control of a large section of the Trans-Siberian Railway in their attempts to reach Vladivostok and then be redpolyed on the Western Front after Russia abandoned the war. In fact, already they were being seen as not only a potential valuable tool in the reactivation of an Eastern Front but also as a useful weapon in support of the White Russian forces fighting against the new Soviet government. The French had recognized the autonomy of a Czech military corps under the authority of the Czechoslovak National Council as early as August 1917 but in spite of Beneš's visit to London in October under the aegis of Steed and Seton-Watson's urgings the Foreign Office under Hardinge and Clerk were reluctant

to give more than an expression of sympathy with Czech aspirations on the basis of self-government of minor nationalities. The geographical position of Bohemia is an almost insuprable obstacle.(160)

-A point which, of course, had been made by numerous commentators, whether pro-Habsburg or not, as has been seen in Chapter VI;

Writing from Switzerland, Lord St. Cyres, the British attache at the Legation in Berne also advised caution in a memorandum to the Foreign Office, saying:

While the Young Czech party wanted to create an independent state, the conservative 'Old Czechs' were still very much Imperial Austrians and would be quite content with Trialism.(161)

While Masaryk wanted to see the Czech troops transfered to the Western Front as soon as possible and the French General Foch finally agreed(162), British military planners told the Foreign Office that "it would seem far wiser to allow them to remain in Russia where their presence might be of importance."(163)- i.e. against Lenin's government. In fact the British military were actively contemplating an invasion by their Far Eastern ally Japan in Siberia to link up with the Czechs with the dual aim of reforging an Eastern Front in conjunction with the anti-Bolshevik forces of Denikin, Wrangel and Kolchak and overthrowing the pro-peace, new Russian government. For the Czech National Council thi\$

fortuitous usefulness to the British and French was a heaven sent opportunity to press the British government "to recognize the Czech army under the authority of the National Council." (164) In fact, Milan Štefanik, the Czechoslovak military adviser went so far as to demand this recognition, pointing out that the French had already done so and that it was, moreover, fully in accord with the British policy of undermining the morale of the Austro-Hungarian army. Not unsurprisingly, Štefanik was strongly supported by Steed and also by Colonel Granville of the propaganda committee in Italy. The latter even went further than Steed, advocating the "recognition of a Czechoslovak state on par with that of Belgium and Serbia." (!) (165)

Interestingly- and not unsurprisingly here either- the Italians raised "for reasons of domestic policy" objections "to publicly recognizing Czechoslovak independence for that would be tantamount to the recognition of the dismemberment of the Austria Empire." (166)

While it is true that the P.I.B. did not publicly champion the Czech cause as an integral part of Allied war-aims in so many words, Namier's argument that the Czechs merited great support "for their persistent and active opposition to the Germanic Powers", certainly came close to it. (167)

Namier was to conclude that

as far as Austria and the Habsburgs are concerned events have proved that if any hopes have been entertained in the past, they rested on most slender boundaries and that now no chance whatsoever remains of detaching Austria-Hungary from Germany. Therefore absolutely nothing is to be gained by a soft handling of Austria. (168)

It was apparent, too, that British designs to employ the Czechs as an Allied intervention force against the Soviets would dovetail neatly with the recognition of the political aims of the Czech National Council. This interdependence between British recognition and Czech support for British plans in Siberia became quite clear in all the interviews which Beněš had with British statesmen in mid-May. As usual the British government had an *arrière pensée* in that the Czechs could very well thwart any attempt by Lenin's government "to revolutionize the East" TO the potential detriment of the British Empire. (169)

Thus, the *quid pro quo* for Czech collusion with Britain in Siberia was recognition of the Czechs and Slovaks "as a nationality

with just claims to independence."(170) and acceptance of the Council "as the supreme organ of the Czechoslovak movement in Allied contries."(171)

This 'mariage de convenance' so to speak was epitomized by the appearance of two companies of Czech troops as guards of honour on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's visit to Italy. This caused considerable consternation in Vienna and the Neue Freie Presse responded with a particularly scathing attack on Britain as the Empire's true inveterate enemy.

That the Czechs in Russia were to be effectively used as pawns in the wider Imperial chess game of the British was vividly demonstrated in the clash that occurred between Czech and Magyar prisoners of war that broke out at Chelyabinsk, with the latter taking the side of the Soviet government. R. Bruce-Lockhart, the Allies' semi-official representative to Moscow and the éminence grise in situ of intervention in Russia's internal affairs, urged the Foreign Office "to make immediate use of the Czechs and as a consequence direct means would thus be provided to enable the Allies to assist in the reorganisation of Russia."(172) Until now America had studiously avoided becoming embroiled in Russian affairs, as the British and French advocated, but a clever (and many would say 'unscrupulous') tactician like Lloyd George realized that Wilson who prided himself on adopting a highly moral stance vis-à-vis international affairs, would feel "morally obliged to help a highly educated and democratic people like the Czechs." Moreover, while the British had originally actively sought Japanese intervention in Siberia, Lloyd George now thought there was a growing danger they might decide to establish themselves permanently, thus an American intervention "would help to neutralize such a Japanese advance from the east and help establish a joint Allied control."(173)

However, from their initial role as a tool of devious British machinations, the Czechs were to emerge as the real winners of intervention with the declaration by the French government of its willingness "to fulfill (their) aspirations for independence within the historical frontiers of their territories."(174) In a letter to Pichon the British Foreign Secretary, Balfour, then appended his support for Poincaré's speech to this effect.(175) The fact that "within the historical frontiers" included Silesia and the Sudetenland in Bohemia with a large number of Germans, which would ipso facto violate the

principle of nationality per se would not appear to have disturbed either Poincaré or Balfour unduly.

In this way, Britain effectively recognized the Czecho-Slovaks as an 'Allied Nation' with a declaration drafted by Cecil and approved by Balfour. The declaration also stated that "Great Britain recognized at the same time the right of the Czechoslovakian National Council to exercise supreme authority over its belligerent army." (176) Thanks to Steed's prompting the final draft also included the crucial words describing the Council as "the present trustee of the future Czecho-Slovak government." (177)

Masaryk could take particular satisfaction in the fact that contrary to the wishes of the Austrophiles "the preservation of Austria-Hungary was no longer feasible", although he personally thought that the Monarchy "might still vegetate as a sort of small Byzantine Empire." (178) (It will be remembered that the Byzantine Empire had ultimately been reduced to one city-Constantinople.)

Although British recognition was carefully worded- as usual- it was "consistent with the dismemberment of Austria" as Cecil was forced to admit, and in spite of the classic 'mealy-mouthness' of the Foreign Office this is exactly how it was interpreted by the government in Vienna, which issued a formal protest against it. (179)

Lansing from the American State Department was surprised by the British move since the Central Powers might very well retaliate by a similar recognition of Ireland, Egypt and India- an effective riposte of *touché*.' However, curiously perhaps, Berlin was to actually veto a proposal of Austria-Hungary for organizing a pendant to the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities for the 'Subject Peoples of the British Empire.' (180)

On September 2nd 1918 the United States government finally announced its recognition of the Czech National Council as "a de facto belligerent government" and thus the prospect of an anti-Soviet alternative to the Habsburgs in Eastern Europe had gained the enthusiastic approval of Allied statesmen, as A.J.P. Taylor put it. (181) This, together with Germany's military exhaustion on the Western Front set the seal on British and Allied policy of

effectively 'putting the boot in'- on the hapless Habsburg Monarchy.

The only Allied power to remain opposed to the recognition of the Czechs was Italy, fearing that such recognition would set an unwelcome precedent which was sure to be used by the Yugoslavs. For reasons of Realpolitik and scarcely principle the British government had continually refused to cross the Italian ally, although, logically, the recognition of a Northern Slav state implicitly implied recognition of its southern counterpart- its natural corollary. (The linkage between the two had already been acknowledged by Lord Cromer earlier in the war, as has been seen.)

Throughout the war the anti-Habsburg forces had strongly supported the cause of the South Slavs, while the traditionalists in the Foreign Office had merely assumed that- unlike the Czechs- they would be assimilated into Serbia and would scarcely form a distinct political entity to be called 'Yugoslavia.'

At this juncture a report from a certain historian called Captain Temperley from the War Office was to play a decisive role by convincing Hardinge, for one, that the majority of Yugoslavs now favoured complete independence rather than autonomy within the Monarchy- an argument in which he was, naturally, strongly seconded by Steed. Steed argued that the number of South Slavs that would be prepared to accept some form of home rule within the Empire "were small in number and their importance smaller" but "tactical reasons" determined that the Yugoslav demands had "to qualify their demands for unity by adding 'within the framework' of the Monarchy." (182)

This increasing British support for the Yugoslav cause was intimately related to the threatening Piave offensive. In order to undermine the morale of the Austro-Hungarian forces on this front where the Slav units had stubbornly resisted the Italians, British support for an independent state was considered a potentially decisive factor in the coming battle. Thus, this support was essentially tactical rather than principled once again. To further heighten the policy of demoralizing the Austrian forces the British wanted all South Slav prisoners to be incorporated into the Serbian army but once more the Italians objected, saying that only Yugoslav prisoners of Serbian ethnicity-i.e. Orthodox Bosnian Serbs- would be acceptable.

Sonnino remained extremely reluctant to abandon his resolute opposition to an independent Yugoslav state maintaining that such a state would be unable to form an effective barrier to any future German drive on the Adriatic. Knowing that there was great opposition to Italy's predatory designs on Slav territory, Sonnino was careful to emphasize this dimension to his thinking: Who was more likely to thwart future German ambitions in this area? He further reasoned that were indeed the Monarchy to be broken up and the Slav peoples detached in toto from the Empire than the Austro-Germans would inevitably be incorporated into the Reich and the mere prospect of Italy and Germany sharing a common border was- in the words of Rodd's deputy, Erskine- "the real secret of Sonnino's reluctance to encourage the idea of the complete independence of the Yugoslavs."(183)

The fact that the British government seemed at last to be moving towards recognition of a Yugoslav state, as Balfour's speech on July 25th indicated, was welcomed, enthusiastically, by the journal New Europe. "This was a sign", it declared "that the policy of the Rome Congress had become an integral part of British policy."(184)

Italy's opposition, however, was still a serious problem and this was to be further aggravated by renewed conflict between Pašić's pan-Serbs and Trumbić's Croat Federalists. As a consequence Balfour was ready to sanction a draft recognition of a Yugoslav state by Trumbić over Pašić's head- the Serbian Premier still claiming Serbia's exclusive "right to liberate her South Slav kinsfolk." Balfour was, in fact, far more sympathetic to "the relatively advanced Slavs of Croatia" whom Cecil opined "would never consent to be bossed about by the bands of dishonest and murderous intriguers which constitute the backbone of the Serbian government."(185) A more damning indictment of the Serbian ally one would be hard put to imagine as well as a more favourable- if oblique- compliment to the benefits of 'Austrian misrule' (in the case of the Croats)!

Perhaps somewhat curiously, though, in spite of these caustic comments, the British government still proved unwilling to unequivocally support Trumbić in his conflict with Pašić. However, while Drummond did urge this course of action, the revolution in the Monarchy and the termination of the war effectively left the fate of the Yugoslavs in their own hands

before the British could decide which side to publicly support. Since the Yugoslav question was an international problem Britain was not in a position to promote the formation of the new state like that of the North Slavs and in spite of often vouched sympathy for the Yugoslav cause and Steed and Seton-Watson's pressure, a Yugoslav state was never actually a British war aim. However, what can definitely be said is that its creation in the final stages of the war was totally in keeping with the anti-Habsburg policy of the British government, which effectively brought down the curtain on the historic Kingdom of Hungary.

The turn of the tide on the military front was such that the British government was even more resolved to support the demands of the representatives of the Empire's nationalities. Count Burian who replaced Count Czernin as Foreign Minister gave an interview to the *Fremdenblatt* on June 8th which, while rejecting Milner's claim that Austria was a "victim of Germany" nevertheless, emphasized that Austria still wanted a peace based on the status quo ante.

By this juncture, however, it was clear that the British government and Foreign Office were neither interested in a general compromise nor a separate peace. Increasing unrest within the Empire now forced the Austrian government to give the Entente Powers a practical demonstration that the Empire was, *malgré tout*, still a viable state- that 'there was life in the old dog yet'; by launching a last minute military offensive. The Germans were indeed acutely annoyed by this dissipation of the few remaining reserves of strength that the Central Powers had left, but as a demonstration of Austria's independence from Berlin, it proved to be an abject failure.

The Monarchy was now clearly in extremis and a debate now followed amongst the Allied Powers about pre-empting another offensive, however desperate it might be on the Italian Front by an offensive of their own. Lord Curzon, for one, was convinced that the morale of the Austro-Hungarian forces confronting his divisions was catastrophically low but the logistic problems of any attacking army in the mountainous terrain of the Trentino were formidable. Lloyd George was of the opinion that since Austria's position was now "critical in the extreme", turning

Germany's flank was not only tempting but a highly feasible option, logistics notwithstanding. According to an unnamed informant Lloyd George had been assured that "Austria was 'a tale that was told' and a doomed Empire whose subject peoples would either obtain autonomy under the aegis of the Allies or remain in servitude under German oppression." (186)

Although the British Prime Minister evidently preferred to rely upon this seemingly covert diplomatic channel, most of the Cabinet focused their attention upon a long memorandum prepared by the P.I.D. (187) In contrast to Lloyd George's informant the P.I.D. argued that while the Monarchy's internal situation might very well be critical, nothing should be done that might unite the Empire again in a common struggle against the Italians who were widely perceived as the enemy par excellence by all South Slavs. Thus, the P.I.D. maintained, even an unsuccessful invasion of the Istrian peninsula and adjoining Slovene and Croatian territory might very well prove politically counter-productive.

Lord Cecil was in fact the only Cabinet member to dissent from this prognosis, arguing that

it is only in alliance with Germany that Austria becomes formidable. On the other hand the defeat of Austria is a step towards the defeat of Germany, and all the problems connected with the Austrian nationalities should be considered, as far as we are concerned, from that point of view in the first instance. (188)

This was now the leitmotif of the policy of encouraging the subject nationalities to revolt since it would weaken Germany's ability to continue the war. Ad hoc the British had come to support both Czechs and Poles- and more or less the Yugoslavs too. "In the case of the Czechs at any rate", Cecil commented, "we have unquestionably received full value for our endorsement." (189) However, Cecil did have some serious doubts, wondering whether "a series of new states would effectively pacify Europe." In spite of this caveat he, nevertheless went on to hope that "a liberated Bohemia and an independent Poland would form a real barrier against German expansionism provided that they could be induced to co-operate for this object." (190) There was a danger, Cecil admitted, that if the Empire broke up and Hungary abandoned its alliance with Vienna- the alliance having ipso facto lost its *raison d'être* for the Magyar nobility- that the

German provinces of Austria would come to be integrated into the German Reich. Here the Allies could very well find themselves 'hoisted on their own petard' by 'the principle of nationality.' On balance, however, this was preferable since it would be offset by the fact that Germany would no longer be able to command the economic and military services of millions of Slavs (and Roumanians.)

As far as Italy was concerned, Cecil was optimistic in believing that she could yet be induced to moderate her demands in the Adriatic area, although he was forced to admit that Britain was still legally obliged to fulfil the terms of the Treaty of London. (How this could, conceivably, be squared with the independence or autonomy of the South Slavs he, significantly, omitted to say. Indeed, it could not be—being akin to squaring the circle.) Ultimately military considerations predominated and the Allies needed the Italian army, Cecil argued "if the Monarchy were to be shaken to its foundations."

The aim should be, Cecil declared, either to secure Austria's withdrawal from the war in which her relations with the Slavs could be resolved at a peace conference or (and this was Cecil's favoured option)

to bring about her destruction as a military force, in which case we should probably have to take our chance as to the result of the complete break-up of the Austrian Empire and the setting up of a number of new Slav states.(191)

In contrast, however, the War Office adopted a more cautious line and its 'Notes on the situation in Austria-Hungary' drew attention to the fact that "discord and unrest were and had been normal conditions in the Empire" but there still existed "a faint feeling of solidarity amongst the mass of the peoples of the Monarchy." Objectively speaking it was essentially only "the intellectual élite that was fixed on breaking away from the Empire."(192) 'Kaisertreue' and 'Reichstreue' sentiments were still very strong amongst the rural populations of the various nationalities, peasantry and nobility alike, as well as a considerable number of workers in the cities. Thus, the leaders of the Czech and South Slav parties were effectively relying upon the Entente to destroy the Empire, possessing insufficient

internal support to do it themselves. (Another example of 'la trahison des clerics?' (193) Given these facts the War Office solemnly concluded: "It is still premature to argue that the unrest and the demoralization were the last struggles of a perishing Empire." (194)

This detailed analysis by the War Office's intelligence section was a powerful argument for the C.I.G.S. not to take as axiomatic that a military offensive would automatically bring about the Monarchy's collapse. Given the residual feeling of solidarity, if anything the Empire could hope to keep going for some time- and the outbreak of revolution was by no means certain either. However, these considerations did not inhibit the policy which the government had definitely decided upon-i.e one which would entail the Empire's dismemberment. Balfour himself made this position abundantly clear before the War Cabinet in an extensive survey of foreign policy on August 13th when he said vis-à-vis Central Europe:

the issue on the threshold of the whole question was that of Austria-Hungary whose status I now consider to be more or less decided. (195)

With an Allied victory now looming Balfour rhetorically considered the two alternatives of either dismemberment or the Monarchy's preservation in a modified form While paying homage to Austria's past historical role as an essential element in the 'Balance of Power', by saying that "if there were the slightest hope that a renovated Austria or an Austria at all would be a counterpoise to Germany in Central Europe, it really would be worthwhile seeing whether we could not keep her", the conclusion of a close military treaty with Germany after the Emperor Karl's humiliating visit to Spa made this seem highly problematic. (196)

In fact, Balfour argued:

The whole movement, almost unconsciously, but quite steadily has in fact been going or drifting in the direction of giving autonomy, real independence, if possible to Poles, Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs. (197)

Undoubtedly, there was a degree of disingenuity here, on Balfour's part, since it was not just a question of "almost

unconsciously" or "drifting" but of specific aims and policy by the *émigré* leaders of the nationalities, supported by powerful elements within the British government too, as has been seen.

Once these peoples were separated from the Monarchy, Balfour was at one with Cecil in believing that the Magyars would secede too since for them the Monarchy and their domination of its eastern half would have lost its *raison d'être*. The fact that the Austrian Germans would probably join the German Reich, as Cecil had almost surmised, did not trouble Balfour unduly—indeed, quite the reverse. If anything, he thought that this might have a positive effect for the addition of millions of Catholic Austrians would help to dilute the Prussian military ethos of the Junkers that had 'conquered' Germany itself in 1866-71. (A point that Lady Walburga Paget had made in a somewhat different context, as has been seen in Chapter VI (Part II).

In any case Balfour was convinced

that it would be in the interest of the world that Austria be broken up into its constituent elements rather than that the population of 51 to 52 million...should be bound to its other central neighbour, becoming an immense addition both economically and from the point of view of man-power.(198)

The sole dissenter in the War Cabinet from this *Weltanschauung* was General Smuts who openly questioned "whether this was a good thing for the world to break Austria up." Be that as it may, Smuts strongly objected to this policy as being a definite war aim. If such a scenario were to occur after the revolution that Smuts expected to see following the war, would be another matter. That Austria was "in the most desperate condition" he did not doubt and for that reason he believed an offensive should be launched on the Italian Front to "really finish her." In contrast to the P.I.D. he did not consider that such an offensive would necessarily regalanize the Empire which "was beyond redemption militarily. Austria is getting ripe", he argued, "but the pear will not fall so long as we keep shaking another tree."(199)

In fact the desperate situation in which the Monarchy now found herself was epitomized by Count Burian's appeal on September 14th "for confidential conversations on peace to be held in a neutral country." Lloyd George was scathing in his response, declaring that "it was an Austrian ruse on Germany's behalf to gain sympathy for the Central Powers in Allied and Neutral countries", while Balfour on September 3rd dismissed

the note as "a cynical effort to split the Allies." (200) Sir Edward Geddes of the Admiralty asked Balfour whether any reply would de fact imply an acceptance of Austria's request for peace talks and if so could it not be suggested to her that only her alliance with Germany was an effective obstacle to peace? However, the British left it to the Americans to give an official response which only occurred after Bulgaria's surrender on September 25th, forcing both Austria and Germany to ask for an armistice. In so addressing the United States and agreeing to abide by the 14 Points of President Wilson, there remained the flickering hope in Vienna that Austria might yet induce America to play the role of 'honest broker', mediating between themselves the Central Powers- and the Entente. America, after all, was not obliged by treaty to support the demands that the Entente was laying on the Monarchy. However, the Allies now decided on a deliberate policy of procrastination, knowing full well that Austria was indeed 'in extremis.' Thus, as Sir Lewis Namier said to Sir Isaiah Berlin:

I remember the day in 1918 when the Emperor Karl sued for peace. I said to Headlam-Morley: 'Wait'. Headlam-Morley said to Balfour: 'Wait'. Lloyd George said to Wilson: 'Wait'. And while they all waited, the Austro-Hungarian Empire disintegrated. I may say that I pulled it to pieces with my own hands. (201)

The Austrian Foreign Office was to make some last desperate attempts to negotiate with both Britain and France. On October 8th Mensdorff sent a letter to Sir William Tyrrell in which he stressed that his talks with General Smuts had convinced him that both the Monarchy's and Britain's ideas on a peace settlement were not that disparate. Mensdorff further explained that the official peace offer had been sent to Wilson because he had specifically formulated a peace programme, but it well merited consideration by the British government as well. Although Lloyd George requested a translation of the letter, the British Foreign Office did not deign to reply to it, convinced even more that it was an act of pure desperation. For Austria the last throw of the dice was to be the visit of the younger Count Andrassy to Switzerland where he forwarded a memorandum, proposing "to accept the Wilsonian principles without altering the international status of Austria-Hungary." (202) In the memorandum Britain was being asked to effectively help save the Monarchy in her own interests because she could henceforth

rely on 'a good friend in the Danubian basin' instead of being faced with 'une poussière d'états.'

The memorandum, however, was to be overtaken by events. Before it could reach London, The Times had published the proclamation of independence of the Yugoslav Club in Vienna. As a result, Headlam-Morley, for one, argued that in these circumstances no peace negotiations should be entered into with the Austro-Hungarian government. Since the American President had been the original recipient of the peace request the Foreign Office despatched a note to Washington, saying:

In the opinion of the British government the position of Austria-Hungary is completely different to that of Germany's and that the British government will not be prepared to negotiate with the government of Austria-Hungary regarding peace terms as they apply to the Slavonic peoples and districts of the Empire.(203)

On October 16th the Emperor Karl dramatically issued a manifesto in which he declared that henceforth Austria would constitute a Federal State: an act which was as futile as it was tardy- indeed too late.. In fact, it recalled the famous aphorism of Napoleon that 'L'Autriche est toujours en retard- avec une idée et avec une armée.' The fact that the new Regulations were not to be implemented in the Kingdom of Hungary meant that none of the subject nationalities were satisfied and the manifesto succeeded chiefly in both antagonizing the Germans of Cisleithania and fortifying the suspicions and antipathy of the Magyars of Transleithania.(Hungary.) In Britain the manifesto was met by complete silence by the Foreign Office- a silence which spoke volumes'- and total derision by the press. (204)

When 3 days later the American President replied to the memorandum, he declared that, regrettably, his 14 Points speech could no longer be the point d'appui for peace negotiations. The autonomy for the Czechs and Yugoslavs that he had originally put forward was no longer deemed sufficient and acceptable.(205) The Ballhausplatz had effectively played its last card. On October 28th, the last Foreign Minister of the Monarchy, Count Andrassy, had no choice but to ask the United States for an immediate armistice. While the request was being discussed in the Supreme War Council at Versailles, the time-honoured Habsburg Empire disintegrated with nationality after nationality proclaiming its

independence. It was truly the Götterdämmerung of monarchs and aristocrats alike both in Vienna and throughout the territories of the Central Powers.

Even now though, Sir Valentine Chirol for one, in a letter to The Times ventured to suggest that Austria might very well be engaged in an elaborate game of deception in order to gain both time and better terms from which her German ally might also benefit. However, when the Allied forces advanced and compelled the Austro-Hungarian army to capitulate on November 3rd, the Empire in whose name they had surrendered, had ceased to exist.- Sic transit gloria mundi. The armistice that the Allies then proffered was in fact solely related to military and naval matters and in no way committed Britain and her allies to any particular course of action at a Peace Conference. For Austria-Hungary at Versailles, the following year 1919, it really was a question of 'Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate.' (Abandon all hope ye who enter here.)(206)

AFTERWORD AND CONCLUSION

The present thesis has been a study of the diplomatic relations between the Habsburg Monarchy/Austria-Hungary and the attitudes to it on the part of British commentators, public and press in the years 1885-1918. Essentially, it has been a study of how the traditional historical ally of Britain for over two hundred years became the enemy state that had to be destroyed- or so British statesmen came to believe. Prima facie, this developing enmity stemmed from the Monarchy's ever closer relationship with Germany, Britain's declared *bête noire* in chief, but it has been argued here that this closer relationship- dependency even- was largely due to the failure of Britain under the Foreign Secretaryship of Sir Edward Grey to act as an 'honest broker' between the two major alliance systems in Europe in the years 1905-1914. It has been further contended that Sir Edward Grey's effective collusion with the 'Einkreisungspolitik' of Austria by Russia and France made this dependency a self-fulfilling prophecy compelling Austria to accept this 'subordination' *faute de mieux*.

Grey's continual remarks to the effect that he was merely upholding the traditional leitmotif of British foreign policy- i.e. 'the Balance of Power'- failed to convince not only the Austro-Hungarian ambassador, Count Mensdorff, but also other leading Liberal statesmen such as Lord Rosebery, who, indeed, declared that Grey had demonstrably abandoned it. Indeed, far from upholding the principle, Grey undermined it fatally by conniving at Russian designs in Austria's 'backyard'- the Balkans, the only area of major strategic significance to her- and by 'understandings' with France by sanctioning secret military discussions between the General Staffs of both countries, specifically aimed at Germany. While it is understandable that British *raison d'état* dictated that Britain should try to prevent Germany from dominating the continent by either conquering Russia and France or suborning them to her side, nevertheless, the greatest threat to balance of power and peace was not Germany's power but Austria's weakness. "Pauvre l'Autriche- c'est le nouveau enfermé de l'Europe", as André Chéradame had recognized in 1900. Grey, too, had explicitly referred to this fact on the eve of the war in 1913 when he said "We cannot steer with confidence by a star that may dissolve" but

having said that did nothing effective to help her. However, it was not that "the British did not think of Austria as their and tried not to think of her at all", as Paul Schroeder suggests in his highly perceptive article 'World War I As Galloping Gertie'(I)- after the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Austrian naval expansion plans in 1908-9 they assuredly did. (vide Chapter IV). Nor did "they assist in her destruction during the war, in a fit of absence of mind"(2); rather it was a deliberate act of policy. Britain consciously sacrificed Austria, primarily to appease Russia, and then to assuage- and utilize- the national aspirations of the (mainly) intelligentsia of the subject peoples of the Monarchy with the ultimate aim of defeating the principal foe of Germany. Whatever initial hesitations and reservations may have existed in certain parts of the British government, the need to defeat Germany was the cause célèbre, and it can be cogently argued that this was even the leitmotif and arrière pensée of the two most principled supporters of the subject nationalities- Henry Wickham Steed and Robert Seton-Watson.(vide Chapter II). That the subject peoples of Czechs, Roumanians, Serbs etc. were really no more than pawns in a wider chess game- in spite of the many honeyed words and expressions of sympathy by many British statesmen- was to be clearly in evidence during the post-war years when they were almost casually dispensed with in the Age of Appeasement- epitomized most dramatically and brutally by Neville Chamberlain in 1938 when he dismissed the Czechs as coming from 'A far off country of which we know nothing.'

Like the hapless hero of Gilbert and Sullivan's opera, Ruddigore, Sir Frederick Murgatroyd, Austria was 'the perennial victim of circumstances.' Nolens volens, she was forced into a dependency that Aehrenthal, for one, was so assiduous in trying to avoid- but even his supreme act of Austria-Hungary's independence of Berlin- the annexation of Bosnia- was misconstrued by British statesmen as exactly the reverse, as Count Tarnowski ruefully noted. The Wilhelmstrasse was in fact highly annoyed since it threatened to endanger Germany's considerable economic and commercial interests in Ottoman Turkey.

Austria's underlying weakness- her Achilles heel- however- i.e her 'Nationality Problem', noted so perceptively by Peter Turnbull as early as 1840 and then graphically depicted by Robert

Seton-Watson and Steed in the early years of the 20th century could not be disguised by this seemingly bold and audacious act which discomfited even her principal ally. Indeed the fundamental political weakness of 'The Dual Anarchy', the harbinger of possible eventual disintegration (a kind of memento mori) weighed high on the minds of statesmen in both Vienna and Berlin, as the British well knew. Indeed, the German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, once despairingly exclaimed: "We are fettered to a corpse!" But again Britain did nothing to alleviate the problem by using her influence to restrain Russia from furthering discord in the Balkans. Thus, what Grey claimed he feared most: a preventive war launched by Germany out of fear of Russia's growing strength and Austria's continuing decline, actually happened. Germany was really forced to accept war- even to provoke it- in 1914 before her chief ally completely disintegrated, as the German Foreign Secretary Jagow acknowledged. Even as severe a critic of the Berlin government, the German ambassador to London, Prince Lichnowski, conceded in a letter to the Secretary that "the idea of sacrificing Austria as an ally was furthest from his mind...and if the Monarchy had let the Sarajevo murder, the stronger of all provocations, pass without doing anything, then its rapid decline, would no longer be delayed." (3) In this respect Gerhard Ritter's thesis as pointed out in the Introduction is assuredly right. Whatever other motives Germany might have entertained- or came to entertain- the principal and foremost was to prevent the disintegration of her ~~one~~ real ally. Hence, the notorious 'blank cheque'-where Austria was given carte blanche to act as she saw fit. However, it was important to note that if it were Germany that gave it, it was, nevertheless, Austria that cashed it. (Did she have any choice?) One might say that in fact both Austria and Germany were locked, unavoidably, in a fatalembrace, compelled like desperate gamblers with possible doom hanging over them to play 'va banque' not by any means out of certainly of winning but out of desperation of losing- with the odds increasingly stacked against them.

Britain's responsibility for the conflict and Austria's ultimate demise is indeed a heavy one since Britain alone was not

formally aligned with either of the two European power blocs and thus in the unique position of 'managing' the Concert of Europe so as to control the increasingly fraught situation in the Balkans. While it is true that Grey did exercise some moderating influence over both Russia and France in their conflict with the Triple Alliance over Albania in 1912-13 to Austria's advantage- which Lichnowsky readily acknowledged, nevertheless, this was, effectively, the only real ray of light. Britain's previous 'track-record' in Balkan affairs, as far as the Monarchy was concerned, was lamentable. The British had consciously striven to undermine the long-standing co-operation between Russia and Austria over Macedonia, which the Mürzsteg Punctation of 1903 had epitomized, as Hardinge acknowledged. This was done, moreover, in the full knowledge that this co-operation had been an essential factor for peace not only in the Balkans but in Europe as a whole too. Indeed, Russia was specifically enjoined to become 'the arbiter of Europe' in order to distract her from challenging British interests in Central Asia. This, however, represented nothing less than the greatest threat imaginable to the Monarchy. When again in 1908, the Monarchy sought to legitimize de jure her de facto occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by annexation- an occupation of some 30 years standing, initially suggested by Britain herself at Berlin in 1878-9- indeed, even annexation had been mooted- Britain had been instrumental in promoting an international crisis. Aehrenthal had been outraged by the volume of criticism unleashed on him by the British press and the blatant double-standards of the British government when it came to the question of 'the sanctity of international treaties.' After all, Britain had continually connived at and acquiesced in French designs on Morocco from 1902 onwards, and accommodated Russian pretensions in Persia in 1907, and again, in spite of some private misgivings, Italian designs on Tripoli and Cyrenaica in 1911-12. And most importantly of all, Russia had been quietly allowed to take a leading role in the formation of a Balkan League, centred on Serbia, Austria's bête noire, directed specifically against the Monarchy in 1912-13.

Britain under Grey's Foreign Secretaryship was perfectly au courant with what Russia was doing but chose to remain silent- no word of warning was given. And as mentioned before the old legal

maxim of 'Qui tacet consentire'- he who is silent gives consent- is applicable here too.

Britain's grande faute par excellence, however, for which she has failed to offer any substantial 'mea culpa' whatsoever is to acknowledge that in effectively allowing Austria 'to go under' (Untergehen in Franz Joseph's expression) Britain made a war for 'the mastery of Europe' (in A.J.P. Taylor's phrase) nigh on inevitable: a war between Russia and Germany, which was to have its even bloodier sequel in 1941-45. For after all, the Monarchy, encompassing as it did, the vast Danubian basin, occupied the central and pivotal points of the entire European heartland. Paradoxically, one might say, that the 'balance of power' was thus destroyed by the very power that claimed to uphold it. In this respect too, if Grey had made Britain's position clear much earlier in that last fateful week in July- the evening of the 27th- than it is conceivable that Germany could have been restrained in her support for Austria- but what were both the French and the Germans to make of Grey's declaration to Paul Cambon, the French ambassador: "You mustn't count on our coming in" and to Prince Lichnowsky, the German ambassador: "You mustn't count on our staying out."?

That the First World War was in essence not only The Third Balkan War but more importantly 'The Second War of The Austrian Succession' is, curiously, a point which has not received the attention it merits in previous literature on the subject: for, as Albert Sorel had foreseen in 1900: "Le jour ou l'on croira avoir résolu la question d'orient (la Turquie), l'Europe verra se poser inévitablement la question d'Autriche." (4) Statesmen on both sides of the political divide between the two alliance systems had openly recognized this fundamental fact. Thus Count Czernin, ambassador to Bucharest and later Austrian Foreign Minister, spoke of his country's 'hopeless encirclement' and Count Tschirsky, the German ambassador in Vienna declared that "Austria is on her deathbed" (5), while Pašić, the Serbian Premier said "after Turkey, now it's Austria's turn" and the Russian Foreign Minister, Sazonov, remarked "Austria must be dismembered." (6) The Emperor Franz Joseph himself had surmized that Austria's ultima hora had struck, as has been mentioned, and Nicholas II, his Russian counterpart, had agreed when in an interview with the

British ambassador Buchanan, he declared "the dissolution of the Empire was merely a question of time." (7)

Yet far from hindering this dénouement with all its attendant dangers for peace, the British chose to advance it. Thus, from the very beginning of the war, Winston Churchill as First Lord of the Admiralty tried to entice the Italians into joining the Allies by specifically stating that "the inheritance of the Habsburg Empire was at stake" and they "should assist the imprisoned nationalities in the grip of the Habsburgs and settle the map of Europe on national lines." (8)

While it cannot be denied that doubts and misgivings existed as to the exact policy to be pursued vis-à-vis "the extraordinary Austro-Hungarian Empire" (9) on the part of certain sections of British government and society—and indeed even outright opposition by Radicals, Socialists and Conservatives alike for a variety of reasons, as Chapters VI and VII have indicated, the aim of disruption and dismemberment became dominant and overwhelming, as Joseph Redlich had perspicaciously predicted as early as 1913: "In London they would gladly see the Monarchy shattered, for the ideal of English policy is the formation of small states in Europe which can be played against each other." (10) In this respect Redlich was merely extrapolating from the policy of all empires from the Roman onwards—one of 'divide et impera.' If critics of the Monarchy like Steed and Seton-Watson had argued that this was time-honoured Habsburg practice then Redlich maintained that this was equally applicable to the British Empire in both its internal and external relations. (De te quoque fabula narratur!)

When in extremis, the younger Count Andrassy made what was to be the last desperate attempt by the Austrian government to preserve the Monarchy "by accepting the Wilsonian principles of self-determination for the nationalities without altering the international status of Austria-Hungary" (11), the October memorandum was roundly rejected in London. Andrassy's appeal for British help fell on deaf ears for far from wishing to have "a good friend in Austria-Hungary rather than 'une pousnière d'états in the Danubian basin'" (12), that is exactly what Britain wanted, as Redlich had correctly surmised some five years earlier.

The winter of 1916/17 was a momentous period in the history of the war, particularly as it affected Austro-British relations. The old Emperor, Franz Joseph, finally passed away in November 1916, which seemed not just to point to the passing of an era but presage too a memento mori for the Empire itself, as Franz Joseph himself had feared. Asquith and Grey's government, bitterly attacked by Seton-Watson for its incompetence - or rather lack of it in prosecuting the war and the disasters in Serbia and Roumania - fell and was replaced by a Coalition government with Lloyd George as Premier and Arthur Balfour as Foreign Secretary. The Central Powers had made a peace offer in December and Woodrow Wilson, the American President had given his famous 'Peace Without Victory' speech on January 22nd in an attempt to mediate between the two sides but the Allied Note of January 10th instead of responding to the new Emperor Karl's of basically the status quo ante seemed merely to call for the Monarchy's complete dismemberment under the guise of 'liberating subject peoples' from foreign domination. It may in fact be severely doubted that either Lloyd George or Balfour were sincere at any time in negotiating a compromise peace but merely interested in meaning Austria away from her ally, Germany, but this in itself was effectively precluded by their continual refusal to give the Monarchy any concrete guarantee of her territorial integrity, thus forcing Austria, no less volens, back on her only real support - Germany. Rather, both statesmen assumed that sooner or later Austria would have to come to terms the Allies decided upon - through economic and military exhaustion and potential internal revolt, as chapter VII has indicated. Lloyd George did not doubt the bona fides of the Emperor Karl's special representative, Prince Sixtus, at their interview in Paris in April 1917, when the latter informed him of the Emperor's sincerest wish for peace, even to the extent of promising to use his good office with the German ally to agree to the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France. Prima facie receptive, Lloyd George said that "we had an old feeling of friendship towards Austria and Britain would willingly shake hands with her if she would leave Germany." However, the sting in the tail was: "Italy is our ally and we cannot make peace without her." (13) As Prince Sixtus knew full well the secret Treaty of London with Italy promised her large

swathes of territory at the Monarchy's expense, even if this contradicted 'the principle of nationalities' which the Allies claimed to hold so dear. Lloyd George in fact remained unmoved when Sixtus pointed out quite legitimately that there were more Italians in Marseilles than Trieste." (14) and that Austria-Hungary could hardly be expected to cede important sections of the Dalmatian littoral, inhabited by South Slavs, to a naval rival like Italy. Quite clearly too, the treaties with Russia, Roumania and Serbia, which had promised other vast territories to Britain's allies and which Balfour in the Commons significantly refused to repudiate when pressed by Radicals like Noel Buxton, meant that the peace on offer from Lloyd George and Balfour's side, was if not exactly 'a Carthaginian peace' then one not far from it. Count Czernin's comments on Lloyd George's manoeuvrings and the Allied Note of January 1917 were: "I suppose the Monarchy should be grateful if the British Premier deigns to leave anything in her possession!" (15) The Austrian Foreign Minister's distrust of Lloyd George was further heightened when he heard that the British Prime Minister had specifically told Bissolati, a Socialist member of the Italian government that "there did not exist a favourable stream of opinion in Britain for the preservation of Austria" (16) - which was certainly not true, but merely an indication of his own thinking.

All things considered, in spite of by no means insignificant domestic opposition, the fulfillment of official promises made to Britain's allies, would indicate, that the Empire would effectively cease to exist if the Allies won the war - whatever remarks were, from time to time, made to the contrary - to assuage certain sections of public opinion. Moreover, it is in the light of tactics rather than principle - as Lloyd George himself said - that such manoeuvres as Smuts's mission to Switzerland to confer with Count Mensdorff should be seen, and in the light of military disasters such as Russia's withdrawal from the war in early 1918 and the previous disaster of the Italians at Caporetto in the autumn of 1917. These dramatic victories by the Central Powers, however, reinforced the view that Germany might yet secure the Monarchy's preservation by vi et armis on the field of battle rather than trusting in the possibility that Britain might give a categorical guarantee to do so as the price of a compromise peace.

Indeed, in this respect, Northcliffe's Political Information Department (P.I.D.) was to be particularly sanguine when it declared:

We have pledged ourselves to the entire independence of too many of Austria-Hungary's constituent elements to make it practicable.(17)

Given the importance ascribed to the life and work of the two great commentators on Austro-Hungarian affairs- Robert Seton-Watson and Henry Wickham Steed- as Chapter III has indicated, a brief assessment needs to be made of how far these two remarkable men were responsible for the demise of the centuries' old Habsburg Empire. (The perennial question of the role of the individual in history!) While Sir Lewis Namier had jokingly boasted at the end of the day 'to have pulled the Habsburg Empire apart with his own hands', it was, of course, Seton-Watson and Steed, like some latter-day intellectual John the Baptists, who effectively paved the way.

If Seton-Watson is taken first, it is undeniable that many of the political leaders of the Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Roumanians and Serbs, like Masaryk, Hrdza and Trumbić, gave him a great deal of credit. On the other side of the coin, many Austrians and Hungarians concurred, viewing Seton-Watson as 'a grave-digger of the Monarchy' and 'an inveterate enemy of Hungary!' Following the post-war settlement at Versailles in 1919 Seton-Watson was to receive the fulsome praise of the first group and the marked bitterness of the second- so much so (and here is a personal note) I have discovered that he is still persona non grata in Hungary until this day. (An accolade and testimonial of sorts!) Curiously, though, this was not always determined by national affiliation. In fact, tribute and criticism in equal measure came from both sides of the fault-line between Austro-Hungarians and the successor statesmen of the newly independent countries. Thus, the pan-Serb leader Pašić continued to view Seton-Watson with his Yugoslav ideals and support for Trumbić with unremitting hostility, while the Austrian Joseph Redlich, who had early on surmized that England was the Monarchy's enemy, remained a good friend. This was, similarly, the case with the so-called 'Red Count' of Hungary, Michael Károlyi along with one of Hungary's most distinguished elder statesman and historian

Oskar Jászi, who in his seminal work 'The Dissolution of The Habsburg Monarchy', praised Seton-Watson for clearly identifying early on his own Magyar people's treatment of the subject nationalities as the Achilles heel of the Monarchy which, if not timely addressed, would be its downfall.(18) That wiser heads in the spirit of Eötvös and Déak had failed to prevail remained Jászi's (and probably Seton-Watson's too) bitterest regret.

That Seton-Watson's journal New Europe played an important role in informing British government and society alike of the intricacies of the national problems of the Monarchy- just like his pre-war works- there can be little doubt. But it was even more significant as a powerful propaganda tool advocating that 'Austria delenda est.' The journal was, in fact, in some respects, analagous to that of Lenin's Bolshevik newspaper, Iskra- The Spark- whose sub-title was, significantly, 'From a Spark a Fire shall be ignited.'

Naturally, it was ultimately defeat in war which destroyed the Monarchy and the various subject nationalities that brought it down. However, while it cannot be said that the social and political aspirations of the intelligentsia- in particular- of the Czech, Slovak and Rumanian peoples, etc., were created by Allied propaganda per se, they were assuredly fostered and nurtured by it. Here Seton-Watson played an inestimable role. The inter-Allied propaganda conference in London at the end of February 1918 and the actual launching of the propaganda distribution campaign at the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Rome in April, owed a great deal to Seton-Watson's input. Many of the desiderata from his Memoranda on Propaganda were copied verbatim into the leaflets to be distributed behind the Austro-Hungarian lines in Italy and elsewhere. These included the denunciation of the deficiencies of the Dualist System and emphasizing the futility of expecting any meaningful constitutional reform, while stressing the advantages of complete independence. The fact that deserters from the Austro-Hungarian army were found carrying such propaganda is testimony to their effectiveness and the official Austrian history of the war was to pay a back-handed compliment when it declared that "the enemy deployed a novel weapon- that of propaganda- which undermined our morale at the front and the rear."(19)

It was perhaps Sir Bernard Pares who summed up Seton-Watson's achievement best when he said: "You have helped to build a considerable part of the New Europe"- which is, of course,

exactly what the journal so named intended.(20)

Although Seton-Watson was arguably the better known publicist Steed was more widely known as a public figure with easier access to prominent politicians. He had a good personal acquaintanceship with Clemenceau and was on particularly good terms with Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, whom he influenced greatly. Steed made a large impression on Colonel House, the American President's special advisor and indeed served him in a honorary capacity as an advisor on General and South-East European questions. Grey had declared Steed persona non grata after the former's harsh criticism of his policy which had led to Turkey joining the side of the Central Powers in October 1915 and had forbade any of his officials to have any dealings with him. As a consequence it fell to his friend and colleague, Seton-Watson to become the unofficial specialist on Austrian and Balkan affairs that they were allowed to consult, and indeed the main intermediary with Central European exiles. But since the views of both men were virtually interchangeable, this scarcely made any difference.(The main difference had been that Steed had come to a much more critical view vis-à-vis the Monarchy than Seton-Watson after the Friedjung and Agram Treason Trials in 1908-9.) After the fall of Asquith/Grey's government at the end of 1916 Steed came into his own, having an increasingly important influence in the corridors of power. His February Memorandum to the Foreign Office, in particular, helped scotch residual pro-Habsburg feelings that Dualism could yet be overcome within the framework of the Monarchy and that its federalization were still possible. More importantly, as Chapter VII has indicated, he was able to convince Lord Northcliffe, recently appointed as Director of Propaganda in Enemy Countries, that since "the struggle to 'save Austria' was at the bottom of the whole pacifist and defeatist campaign in Allied countries", it was a vital British interest to destroy it. As a result, Steed was effectively given carte blanche to embark on a blatantly anti-Habsburg 'crusade' together with Seton-Watson whose appointment to the P.I.D. he secured as "the best authority on Austria-Hungary." It was Steed too, who secured Seton-Watson's presence at the Rome Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in April 1918, in spite of the

Italian government's strenuous opposition. Here both men played a leading part in sowing discord amongst the Austro-Hungarian troops on the Piave Front, with Steed having a particularly important effect, propaganda-wise, on the Croatian and Carniolan Slav regiments. By the autumn of 1918 Crewe House, assisted by the P.I.D., as previously mentioned, had become the *primus movens* behind official policy vis-à-vis the Monarchy and thus both men were in a favourable position to further their long-term goal for the Empire's destruction. They were in effect no longer 'advisers' but official experts. From the Monarchy's point of view these two protagonists of the journal *New Europe* were, decidedly, the terrible twins. Their contacts and sources of information were essentially the same and it is reasonable to assume that both men imparted such information as would be helpful and useful to the other in equal measure. It was a 'Dual Alliance' of a rather effective kind on both the intellectual and practical level to the Empire's detriment. If Seton-Watson were 'a grave-digger' of the Monarchy, Steed was no less so and both men were pall bearers of the coffin.

All in all, one can say that both Seton-Watson and Steed with their unparalleled knowledge of Austria-Hungary imparted a powerful gloss to the British government's policy of dismantling the Empire. They were not by any means the catalyst but they did give the policy an important intellectual sanction. It was not after all paramount concern for 'the oppressed nationalities' *per se* that motivated British policy- although this was a convenient weapon with which to berate the Monarchy in the service of British *raison d'état* and *Realpolitik*- but, primarily, concern to hamstring Germany's major ally and hasten Germany's defeat. Hence, the lack of effective concern for the successor states in the period between the two World Wars. Could the Monarchy have been detached from her ally? Both Seton-Watson and Steed thought no. Perhaps- but then given their agenda, perhaps, that is what they least wanted? Be that as it may, whatever possibility may have existed would have been dependent upon the British government giving a concrete guarantee of the Monarchy's territorial integrity- and this is something that no British statesman, be it Grey, Balfour or Lloyd George were prepared to do. Whatever hopes they held out of a 'compromise peace', such as

the Smuts mission to Switzerland seemed to epitomize (however sincere Smuts may have been personally) were rather in the nature of ploys, tactics to buy time, reflecting Allied military reverses in Italy and Russia, and in the hope that forthcoming American military aid would not only redress the military balance but change it, dramatically, in the Allies' favour. For both Lloyd George and Balfour knew only too well that whatever the successes the Central Powers were achieving on the battle-field, on the home front the deprivation and hardship suffered by the civilian population was enormous owing to the economic blockade. In actual fact it was not so much military defeat that caused Austria-Hungary's destruction- however this may have prima facie appeared- but starvation. As Balfour so sanguinely expressed it: "If Austria is in extremis- she must come to us!" (21)

One of the essential features of the compact made in 1867 between Austria and Hungary and known as the Ausgleich was that economic and commercial policy required the agreement of both governments of the two halves of the Empire. Thus every Habsburg Foreign Minister found that he had to devote considerable time and energy in negotiating with both the Prime-Ministers and Finance Ministers of both states on matters ranging from commercial treaties with foreign governments to the regulation of tariffs and the building of railways in strategically important areas, quite separately from any dealings with the common Imperial and Royal government in Vienna. This was by no means an easy task since the disparate economic and commercial interests of Austria and Hungary often led to acrimony and conflict. Thus while the Austrians were primarily concerned with protecting their industries from the more technically advanced economy of their German ally, the Magyars wanted to protect their nascent industries from both German and Austrian competition. A particular bone of contention between Austria and Hungary was agriculture. The Austrians wanted to import cheap food but this was diametrically opposed to the economic interests of the Magyar magnates and gentry that dominated the political life of Hungary, still mainly an agricultural country. The last thing the Magyar nobility wanted was cheap grain and meat from Balkan states such as Serbia and the heated exchanges between the two governments on this issue led one British observer to comment in 1910 that "it was impossible to please Budapest and Vienna as it is to serve God and Mammon." (1) Given this dichotomy of interest it was hardly surprising that the Monarchy was unable to forge a satisfactory commercial arrangement with either the German Empire, its chief ally or the Balkan states. This salient fact largely explains the great political crises that periodically shook the Monarchy every ten years when the common commercial institutions of the Empire and the Kingdom came up for renewal. (Since 1867 the Monarchy was technically divided into the 'Empire of Austria' and the 'Kingdom of Hungary,) This decennial period of conflict and the resulting

sundering of Austria and Hungary in the economic sphere gave rise to the quips that the Empire was a "Dual Monarchy on short notice" (auf Kundigung) and that "the Dual Anarchy" would be a more accurate description.

By the end of 1897 increasing acrimony between Czechs and Germans in the Bohemian Diet and the Imperial Reichsrat in Vienna over linguistic and national issues had effectively paralysed all parliamentary government in Austria so that no majority could be found in any case to negotiate with Hungary over a renewal of the commercial Ausgleich. As a result various ad hoc expedients had to be resorted to annually in order to prolong the old agreement. This constitutional malaise at the very heart of the Empire led one diplomat to exclaim in exasperation: "An archangel could not solve our domestic problems." (2) The economic problems of the Monarchy were further compounded by the notorious inefficiency of the government's commercial departments. To illustrate this point the Austrian journalist Baernreither mentioned the fact that while the Sektionschefs of these departments never went further than a midday stroll in the Ringstrasse the head of the Prussian Ministry of Trade took the trouble to personally travel to the United States to discuss commercial matters. (3) Nowhere was this chronic inefficiency more apparent than in the commercial department of the Foreign Office where a routine request from the British chargé d'affaires vis-à-vis the duty payable on Canadian Whiskey in 1903 took a full ten months to elicit a reply. (4) The following year the same chargé d'affaires (Johnstone) informed the British Foreign Secretary Lord Lansdowne "that unexampled delay now occurs in extracting answers from this government in which ministries other than the ministry for foreign affairs are involved"- particularly when Budapest had to be consulted. "The dilatoriness of this country", he added, "if continued in progressive ratio, will soon rival that of Turkey." (5) This was a point which had been previously stressed by the Frenchman André Chéradame in his book 'L'Autriche au seuil du vingtième siècle' in 1900.

On the eve of the First World War Austria-Hungary ranked fourth after Great Britain, Germany and France in European industrial production but its contribution was only six per cent of this production. It held third place in the production of coal and fifth place in the production of crude oil and textiles, behind Great Britain, Germany, France and even Russia, but ahead of Italy. The Empire also contributed approximately 2.7 million tons to European steel manufacture which was about 6.3 per cent of the total.(6) Throughout the period 1885-1914 the Monarchy was very much dependent upon the influx of foreign capital to finance economic development, which was a key pointer to the Empire's underlying economic weakness. Thus in 1914 foreign capital investment rose to ten thousand million crowns of which six thousand millions came from Germany, three thousand millions from France, while in contrast Austro-Hungarian capital invested abroad barely reached five hundred thousand crowns.(7) Austria-Hungary played no part in the escalating colonial struggle in the second half of the nineteenth century and even the task of industrialising the two occupied Ottoman provinces of Bosnia-Herzegovina was effectively left to German capital. As a consequence circumstances did not allow the Dual Monarchy to play the role of a front-rank power in the international economic competition at the beginning of the twentieth century and this fact certainly had a great impact on both the Monarchy's foreign and internal policy. Yet it must be said that this did not preclude Austria-Hungary's status as a Great Power by virtue of its large population (over 51 million), the quality of its civilization, the vastness of its territory, stretching from Switzerland to the steppes of the Ukraine and from Saxony to the mid Adriatic coast, and the variety of its agricultural and mineral resources. Indeed, from this point of view, it was not so fanciful as to view the Monarchy as a power of the future, a prospect which was obscured in the minds of many observers

such as Henry Wickham Steed, the Vienna correspondent of The Times and André Chéradame by the immensity of the Empire's political problems.(8)

Political considerations often worked to the detriment of the Monarchy's economic potential, however. Thus, for example, the Austrian sugar-beet industry was sacrificed to foreign pressure with the agreement of the foreign ministry, even though it was one of the world's most prosperous (9), while Goluchowski was even prepared to sacrifice the Austrian wine industry to Italy if this were the price demanded for that country's continuing adherence to the Triple Alliance.(10) On occasions, it was true, a Foreign Minister like Aehrenthal could exploit the pressure of commercial interests to prod the reluctant governments of Austria and Hungary along a path which he had already decided to take. Thus Aehrenthal utilized the complaints of the Monarchy's merchants and industrialists who had been badly affected by Turkey's boycott of the Empire's goods after the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 to force the two governments to come to a financial agreement with the Ottoman Empire.(11) Generally speaking, however, commercial interests in both halves of the Monarchy were markedly reluctant to take risks and it was the Ballhaus platz and not the capitalists, for example, that seriously considered a move into the colonial field in Asia Minor in 1913-14.(12) Even then Austro-Hungarian businessmen were hesitant and reluctant to follow unless the government were prepared to underwrite their investments. Nevertheless there are two discernible instances in this period when economic interests did have an impact on foreign policy, even if this was mainly in a negative sense. Thus, as mentioned previously, Austrian industrialists were keenly anxious to protect their companies from more efficient and cheaper German competition while Hungarian landowners for their part wanted high tariffs on imported agricultural products from Serbia and other Balkan states. Thus a tariff war with Roumania in the later 1880's drove the poor Foreign Minister Kalnoky to distraction since it undermined the Monarchy's alliance with that country while the Magyar aristocracy successfully

frustrated Aehrenthal's attempts to reach some kind of modus vivendi with Serbia in the years 1906-11 by means of economic concessions.(13) However, this being said, in the field of power politics in the first half of the 1890's the protectionist concerns of Austrian industrialists and Hungarian agriculturalists alike were unhesitatingly sacrificed in a whole series of commercial treaties concluded between 1892 and 1894. Consequently the two instances quoted were very much the exception.(14)

As in the case of public opinion-in what was after all still primarily a military, bureaucratic and aristocratic state-economic factors were significant in this respect: they constituted one facet of the situation which the foreign minister considered when he came to make his decisions. Here the fact was that whatever the economic potential of the Monarchy might be, in the circumstances of the period 1885-1914, Austria-Hungary was a relatively backward state compared with Germany, France and Great Britain. Nor, as the twentieth century progressed, did the Empire's relative position in the ranks of the Great Powers improve, which did not bode well for the Monarchy's military and naval position. For example in the later nineties Italy overtook the Monarchy in naval construction and was never to lose its lead thereafter. Then again, whereas in the period 1906 and 1909 Russia and Italy succeeded in devoting a quarter of their revenues to armaments and Britain two fifths, Austria-Hungary barely managed more than an eighth.(15) An important contributory factor to this situation, it must be admitted, was not just the Monarchy's general economic position but the fact that in this instance the parliamentary bodies of the two states (Austria/Hungary) did exercise real power by their control over military and naval expenditure.(16)

The general world slump in the 1870's and the race to establish tariff barriers-exacerbated ironically by her German ally-continued to be felt at the turn of the century and adversely affected the Monarchy's economic situation.(17) As

late as December 1904 Baron Jettel von Ettenach was complaining that "Germany's commercial policy is strangling us!" (18) and while a commercial treaty was eventually concluded in 1906 the higher tariffs embedded in it did nothing to improve the Monarchy's economic situation at all. In this respect it is highly significant that emigration to the United States which had been steadily increasing from the 1880's onwards, reached 220,000 in 1903 and four years later was the highest from any European country. This was a sure indicator of the Empire's economic weakness at this time. While a series of commercial treaties concluded with Russia, Italy and Belgium in the same year, kept grain prices high within the Monarchy and enabled the peasants to buy more of Austria's industrial production with the higher prices received for their agricultural produce, the negative side of the high tariff policy was greater. High food prices at home worked to the disadvantage of Austria's industrial exports which became increasingly uncompetitive compared with those of her German ally as well as France and Great Britain. After 1906 the balance of trade turned against the Empire and the deficits were to increase annually up to the outbreak of war in 1914.

Political factors too added to the Monarchy's difficulties.

Aside from the interminable conflict between the Empire's sixteen nationalities which often reduced parliament to chaos, particularly after the introduction of universal suffrage in 1907 in the Austrian half of the Monarchy, the government consciously discriminated against industrialization per se in the 1880's regarding it as the potential breeding ground of two intractable classes-that of liberal capitalists and socialist workers. Nevertheless having come to realize that industrial development in the modern world could not be delayed indefinitely and relegated ad Graecas Kalendas (i.e. to the end of time), the government embarked on a concerted programme of industrial labour legislation akin to that of Bismarck in Germany. The motivation was again akin to that of the German chancellor's- to wean the growing working class away from revolutionary Marxist ideas. A policy which in fact

met with considerable success. The Monarchy's industrial legislation was in the words of the founder of the Social Democratic party "the best in the world"(19) The negative side of this policy, however, was that it unfortunately made the Empire's industrial products uncompetitive relative to that of Germany and even far off Great Britain in the important Balkan market, and this was particularly true of Austria-Hungary's light industrial exports.(20) These economic problems were further compounded by the continual rivalry and jealousy between the two halves of the Empire, which sought to obstruct one another's industrial development in every way possible. As one Hungarian newspaper commented bitterly in 1900 "the curses of Austria are launched against every fresh chimney-stack erected on Transleithan ground (i.e. Hungary), a sentiment which was duly reciprocated on the part of Hungary at any new Austrian venture.(21)

On top of all this the Monarchy's economic difficulties were further exacerbated by the fact that not only her principal ally Germany but also Great Britain were steadily expanding their share of the Balkan market at her expense, and the Balkans were literally in the Empire's back-yard. Just as Baron Ettenach had complained about Germany's commercial policy at the turn of the century so already the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at St. Petersburg, Count Anton von Wolkenstein had, voiced the opinion in 1885 that Britain should be considered a greater threat to the Monarchy than Russia since the former was clearly "striving for our commercial annihilation."(22) If Austria-Hungary barely managed to hold her own in Bulgaria, for example, with 30% of that country's trade, both Germany and Great Britain increased their share from some 27% in 1891-5 to over 50% in 1904-8. In Roumania too Austria-Hungary faced severe competition from her Germany and after the disastrous 'Pig War' with Serbia in 1906-10 the Empire was never to regain her former economic predominance in that country. Once again it was Germany that took advantage of the Monarchy's embarrassments and seized the lion's share of her trade.(23) However, it is important to remember that the economic situation was not all gloom. A

number of profitable factories were established in the Ottoman Empire and by 1908 Austria-Hungary was second only to Great Britain in economic influence. Thus the boycott imposed by Turkey on commercial relations with the Monarchy with the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina that year was a particularly heavy blow for the Empire to sustain and prompted Aehrenthal to resolve the crisis as soon as possible.

Nevertheless, as the fateful year 1914 approached, there could be no denying the fact that while Austria-Hungary's more advanced industrial and commercial rivals, principally Germany and Great Britain, were steadily increasing their economic influence in the Balkans, the Monarchy's relative backwardness seriously weakened her position throughout the Near East and made it increasingly difficult for her to maintain it by diplomatic means. This economic weakness had a direct impact on the Empire's military and naval potential. Consequently were the Monarchy to seek her salvation in war, if her diplomacy proved inadequate to maintain the Monarchy's position as a Great Power, her chances of success were highly problematic. In this respect the common feeling in Vienna in 1914 of 'better an end to terror than terror without end' was both a counsel of hope-and equally profound despair.

NOTES TO CHAPTERS
AND
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NOTES TO INTRODUCTION- GREAT
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- (1) vide F.R. Bridge, *Great Britain and Austria-hungary 1906-1914, a diplomatic History*. London 1972 and A.F. Pribram, *Austria-Hungary and Great Britain 1908-1914*. Oxford 1951. The period of the First World War, however, has been covered by Wilfred Fetz in his *Peace or Partition: The Habsburg Monarchy and British Policy 1914-1918*, London 1978 and Harry Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary During The First World War; A Study in the Formation of Public Opinion* but, in the main, this lies outside of the period under discussion here.
- (2) *Standard*, 18 August 1905.
- (3) op.cit. B.E. Schmitt, *The Coming of the War*, Vol.1. New York, 1930, p.112.
- (4) Metternich described Castlereagh as "the most European and least insular of all English Foreign Ministers." op.cit. A.F. Pribram, *Austria-Hungary and Great Britain, 1908-1914*, London 1951, p.31.
- (5) This accounts for Palmerston's ultimate hostility to the Magyar revolution of 1848-49 for its success would have, ipso facto, reduced Austria to the status of a second-rate power. However, he remained convinced that "Austria's relinquishing of her Italian provinces in 1848-49" would have "strengthened her internal cohesion." Indeed, after Austria was forced to surrender Lombardy in 1859, Palmerston wrote to Lord John Russell, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in September 1860 that the monarchy would now do well to cede Venice to Italy in return for financial compensation, since "as long as Austria holds Venice she will have every Italian her bitter foe..They will be forced into a quarrel with Austria over Venice, and the sympathies of Europe will go with them and military success will crown their efforts."
- (6) op.cit. A.F. Pribram, *Austria-Hungary and Great Britain*, London 1951, p.42.
- (7) *ibid.* p.43.
- (8) op.cit. A. May, *The Passing of The Habsburg Monarchy*, Philadelphia, 1966, p.223.
- (9) Lord Acton, *Essay on Church and State*, London (2), 1952.
- (10) op.cit. A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918*, Oxford 1954, pp. 284 and 342.
- (11) Griff nach der Weltmacht, Düsseldorf 1961; Germany's Aims in the First World War, London 1967; Krieg der Illusionen, Düsseldorf 1969. Gerhard Ritter-Fischer's greatest critic-comments: "It is part of Fischer's thesis that the German government instead of seeking peace, actually considered war as necessary (in view of the development in the ratios of military strength) and saw in the July crisis of 1914 an especially favourable opportunity for 'a great diplomatic success' which would push Russia out of the Balkans." Anti-Fischer: A New War-guilt Thesis? In: *The Outbreak of World War 1*, ed. by Holger H. Herwig, Toronto, 1991, p.109. Previously Ritter had remarked in his *Der Erste Weltkrieg*: "der grosse Weltkrieg, der seinem Kern und Ursprung nach nichts weiter war als ein Verteidigungskrieg gegen die nationalistische Agitation der Serben und gegen den Imperialismus der Russen.." *ibid.* Bonn, 1964, p.15.
- (12) *The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, From Sadowa to Sarajevo 1866-1914*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972, p.172
- (13) *Austria-Hungary and the Origins of the First World War*, London

Macmillan, 1991, p.73.

(14) Ritter von Bilinski: Interview with the journalist, Heinrich Kanner. In Robert Kann, *Franz Joseph und der Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkriegs*, Vienna 1971, p.16.

(15) op.cit John Leslie, *Österreich-Ungarn vor dem Kriegsausbruch. Der Ballhausplatz in Wien im Juli 1914 aus der Sicht eines Österreichischen Diplomaten*, in 'Deutschland und Europa in der Neuzeit. Festschrift für Karl Otmar v. Aretin, Ralph Melville(ED.) Stuttgart, 1988, vol.11, p.675.

(16) Paul Schroeder, *World War 1 As Galloping Gertie in The Outbreak of World War 1, Causes and Responsibilities*, Holger Herwig ed., Heath and Co. Mass., and Toronto, 1991, p.123 vide Count Czernin's memorandum of June 22nd to Berchtold after the visit of the Tsar and his wife to Constanza in Roumania, which is particularly illuminating in this respect: "Before our eyes in broad daylight, plain for all to see, the encirclement of the Monarchy proceeds, glaringly, with shameless effrontery, step by step..And we stand by with folded arms interestedly observing the carrying out of this onslaught." Luigi Albertini, op.cit. *The Origins of The War of 1914*, trans. and ed. Isabella 11, Massey, London 1952, Vol.1, op.cit. p.531.

(17) 'The First World War began as a Balkan War' vide Joachim Remak: *The Third Balkan War, Origins Reconsidered. The Journal of Modern History* 43 (1971), pp.355-66 cf. Fritz Fellner in *Austria-Hungary, Decisions For War, 1914*, Keith Wilson ed. UCL Press, 1995, pp.16-17: "...the will to make war against Serbia, the desire for a local military action to serve the interests of Austria-Hungary's Vorrangstelle in the Balkans..the will to this third Balkan War dominated the thoughts and actions of Austrian politicians and military men." cf. also Mark Hewitson: "Austrian statesmen, of course, made the initial declaration of war against Serbia on July 28th conscious that the conflict could escalate into a continental or world conflagration. Yet, according to the bulk of their correspondence, they were concerned primarily with the eventuality of a third Balkan war, leaving their German counterparts to take care of the European consequences of that conflict." *Germany and The Causes of The First World war*, BERG 2004, New York and Oxford, p.229.

(18) With consequences far more dramatic than that of the 1st in the 18th century when Austria merely lost Silesia, however important, to Prussia in 1745. vide the Russian Foreign Minister S.Sazanov's explicit reference to Roumania's desire for Transylvania in this context: "Roumania could hope for a part of this Austrian succession." In *The Coming of the War, 1914*, Vol. 1., Benadotte Schnitt, New York, 1950, p.59.

(19) C.A. Macartney, *Problems of the Danube Basin*, Cambridge 1942 Also Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars 1918-1941* (3rd ed.,) Hamden, Conn., Archon Books, 1962., East Central Europe between the Two World Wars, Joseph Rothschild, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London 1974.

(20) *Austria-Hungary in The Origins of World War 1*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2005, pp.127-129.

(21) Paul Schroeder, *World War 1 As Galloping Gertie*, in *The Outbreak...* p.124.

(22) Joseph Redlich, *Schicksalsjahre Österreichs* (The Political Diary of J.Redlich), GrHz, 1955, p.196, entry of April 15th 1913.

(23) L.C.F. Turner, *Origins of the First World War*, Norton, New York 1970, p.5. John Lowe, *The Great Powers, Imperialism and the German Problem 1865-1925*, Routledge, London, 1994, p.222.

British concern to 'appease' Russia, so to speak, is evident throughout the critical period leading up to the outbreak of war in July 1914. As Nicolson wrote to de Bunsen on July 6th: We are chiefly busying ourselves with endeavouring to arrange matters with Russia in regard to Persia, and, in a secondary degree, Tibet." BD, xi, no.33, p.26. Particularly revealing in this respect is the memorandum drawn up by Sir G.Clerk on Grey's instructions on July 8th and finished on July 21st. Emphasizing that Russia was "the one Power with whom it is our paramount duty to cultivate the most cordial relations" Clark said it was essential to make concessions to her (of which negotiations for a naval convention in the spring was one) for otherwise British interests (in Persia) for one "whose maintenance constitutes a cardinal principle of Imperial policy will be endangered..and our very existence as an Empire will be at stake." *ibid.*, p.xi Grey's late personal decision for war against Germany and Austria can not be fully understood unless this background be taken into consideration.

(24) *The Policy of the Entente: Essays on the Determinants of British Foreign Policy, 1904-1914.*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985.

(25) Hardinge MSS., Vol.13, Harding to Goschen, April 7th 1908, copy.

(26) F.O.371/581, Nicolson to Grey, No.63, February 4th 1908 minute.

(27) "A star which may easily dissolve." Thus, Grey recognized the problem only too well. B.D., x(1), No.316, November 21st 1913, Grey's minute. cf. Zimmermann in conversation with the Bavarian charge d'affaires in Berlin: "Austria-Hungary, thanks to her indecision and easy-going ways (Zerfahrenheit) had really become the Sick Man of Europe, as Turkey had once been, upon whose partition, Russians, Italians, Serbs and Montenegrins were waiting." Schön to Hartling, July 18th 1914 Diir, p.6. D. Supplement IV No.2 op.cit. Schnitt, Vol.1., p.319. In this respect Sazanov's remark vis-a-vis Austria-Hungary's nominal ally Roumania is illuminating: "I could not doubt that he (Bratianu-the PM) fully realized that the aged Austrian Emperor and the decrepit Habsburg Monarchy were unreliable allies for young Roumania, impatiently awaiting the moment when she could advance her claim to a part of the Austrian Succession- and she could only hope to receive this inheritance with the help of Russia." op.cit. B.Schnitt, *The Coming of The War*, Vol.1, p.59. cf. Ottokar Czernin's letter to Berchtold on June 22nd 1914, summarizing in a hypothetical statement "the lessons" the Russians and French would give the Roumanians: "Do not tether yourselves to a death-stricken carcass"- "leave the sinking ship while there is still time"- "do not cast in your lot with that of the Monarchy; Vienna can only drag you down into its own destruction, whereas the Entente, at the sharing out of the spoils, will reward you with the gift of Transylvania." Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of The War*, Vol.1. p.531.

(28) op.cit. L.C.F. Turner, p.40. Indeed, when Grey heard about the remarkable alliance between the two traditional Balkan rivals, Bulgaria and Serbia (a prospect that Aehrenthal had always dismissed as a 'chimera'), he took great care that the Monarchy did not get to know, forged, as it had been under Russian auspices. (March 1912) Albertini comments: "Did Sazanov not realise the meaning of these treaties (of the Balkan states) which could not but lead to a war that might spread to the rest of Europe?" Certainly he regarded it with enthusiasm- being a great diplomatic coup for Russia: "Marvellous! 500,000 Serbian and Bulgarian bayonets united together! That will close the door to an Austrian or German invasion of the Balkans for ever!" Albertini, *Origins of The War*, pp.366 and 371 More to the point here, however, did not Grey? The Austrian Prime Minister, Count Stürgh realised only too well the dangers of "the unprecedented rise of the Balkan States which had attained the summit of political and national self-confidence." op.cit. Turner, p.50. As Count Tisza remarked too: "The leitmotif of Franco-Russian diplomacy is to make use of all the Balkan states, or at least a decisive majority of them, for the purpose of upsetting the European balance of power-i.e. to break down the military supremacy of the two empires with the aid of Balkan armies." H.Marczali, *Papers of Count Tisza 1914-15* in *American Historical Review* XXIX, 303-310, January 1924. (O.U.A. VIII, pp. 974-78 (Memorandum to Berchtold, June 24th 1912). Grey, moreover, could scarcely feign ignorance of Russia's ambitions in particular, since in early 1914 the Tsar had told the British ambassador that "the Great Powers must indeed prepare for the coming partition of the Habsburg Monarchy." BD.IX, part 2 NO 849, p.690. In a memorandum prepared for Poincare on September 2nd 1912 the French General Staff had welcomed the war in the Balkans as likely to weaken Austria-Hungary, so freeing Russia to take on Germany: "Under these conditions, the Triple Entente could achieve a victory permitting it to remake the map of Europe." op.cit. Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War*. vide also F.Bridge, *Documents, Sadowa to Sarajevo: The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary*, Memorandum by Sektionsrat Franz, Baron von Matscheko, secret, undated (before June 1914)). U.A. Vol.8 9918: Turkey, who had a natural community of interest with the Triple Alliance and who was a strong counter-weight against Russia and the Balkan States has been pushed out of Europe almost completely and her Great Power position has suffered a real loss..The idea of freeing the Christian peoples of the Balkans from the Turkish yoke so as to use them as a weapon against Central Europe (i.e. Austria-Hungary) has been for ages the practical, political (realpolitische) bases of Russia's traditional interest in these peoples. Now that the Turks have been driven out the Balkan League promoted by Russia and seconded by her ally France, it is quite clear that the founding of a new Balkan League can be only directed against one opponent-Austria-Hungary." p.446.

(29) L.C.F. Turner, *Origins of the First World War*, p.55 cf. F. Bridge, *The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary*, p.356. As the pan-German leader, Konstantin von Gelbsattel put it: "I DEEPLY regretted that we did not support Austria in the Balkan matter.. apparently we even appeased. If this had been the trigger for war everyone would have understood it." B.A. Abteilung, Potsdam N1.

(30) op.cit. O.Czernin, Im Weltkrieg, Berlin 1919, p.43.

(31) Helmuth von Moltke and the Origin of the First World War, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p.152. cf. Bethmann Hollweg's comment that the destruction of Serbia would not only end "the encirclement of the Monarchy" but would also vastly improve Germany's political and strategic position for "if war came from the East so that we have to fight for Austria-Hungary and not Austria-Hungary for us, we have a chance of winning." Konrad Jarausch, The Illusion of Limited War: Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg's 'Calculated Risk', July 1914, General European History 2 (1969) 58.

(32) Quite clearly, Bethmann Hollweg(inter alios) was not averse to utilizing the Monarchy's predicament 'ad gloriam majorem Germaniae.' Fritz Fellner, in common with Fritz Fischer indeed argues:"While people in Vienna were preparing-with unintelligible dilatoriness an lack of consistency- to wage the 'third Balkan War' to subdue Serbia, people in Berlin were not only thinking about a great war, but also , from the very start, carrying out a well-deliberated and well-prepared concept." Fritz Fellner, Austria-Hungary in:decisions For War, p.19.

(33) World War 1 As Galloping Gertie, The Outbreak of World War 1, p.124.

(34) Niall Ferguson, The Pity of War, London 1998, pp.110-111. The 'Entente' had, in fact, become a de facto defensive alliance; however, the fact that this was not officially or publicly acknowledged caused confusion amongst French and Germans alike Right up until the 11th hour the French were not certain of British support-as Cambon discovered in conversation with Grey as late as July 30th, while Germany 'gambled' on British neutrality.

(35)"To turn Fischer on his head", Ferguson argues, "was not the meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence of August 23rd 1911 rather than the Conference of the Kaiser and his military chiefs 16 months later, on December 8th 1912(when as Admiral Adam von Müller noted:"nothing was actually decided") that set the seal on the conflict between Germany and England." The Pity of War, London, 1998, p.65.

(36) As Viscount Esher, a member of the Committee, later declared despondently on October 4th:"The main fact of the War Office plan for a B.E.F. to assist the French General Staff) having been worked out in detail with the French has certainly committed us to fight." K.Wilson, Policy of the Entente, p.123. Th detail included not only the despatch of a British Expeditionary Force but also the blockade of the Belgian and Dutch ports as well as the actual German coast.

(37) Mark Hewitson, Germany and the Causes of the First World War, Oxford and New York, Berg 2003, pp231-232. cf. Paul Schroeder, World War 1 As Galloping Gertie, H.W.Koch ed., London,pp. 101-27, Also revised and edited by Holger Herwig (5th ed.), Heath and co. 1991, pp.116-125. vide also David Calleo, The German Problem Reconsidered, Germany and the World War, 1870 to the Present, Cambridge 1978, p.984. op.cit. Hewitson, pp253-54. H. Kissinger, the American statesman, interestingly observes:"the peace of Europe depended on Britain playing the role of balancer and this, ultimately, signally failed to do." Diplomacy, New York, Simon

and Schutter, New York, 1994, p.76.

(38) Paul Schroeder, *World War 1 As Galloping Gertie*, p.120.

(39) By August 2nd, quite understandably, the French ambassador, Paul Cambon, was asking whether "the word 'honour' should not be struck out of the English vocabulary." op.cit. Turner, p.111.

(40) Albertini II, p.457 n. vide also A.J.P, Taylor, *War by Time-Table*, London 1969, p.80.

(41) Pease diary, July 29th 1914, marginalia by ord Harcourt, British Colonial Secretary on telegrams 11662, Harcourt MSS 552; Asquith to the King, July 30th 1914, in Spender and Asquith, *Life of Lord Asquith*, ii, p.81.

(42) Grey to Bertie, British ambassador in Paris, July 29th 1914, BD, xi, no.283.

(43) op.cit. F.Bridge, *The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary*, p. 321.

(44) In his War memoirs, David Lloyd George made a concerted attack on the persona of Grey and on his general modus operandi throughout the July crisis, saying "Grey's mind was not made for prompt action..He altogether lacked that quality of audacity which makes a great Minister..The facts tell their own tale of a pilot whose hand trembled in the palsy of apprehension, unable to grip the levers and manipulate them with a firm and clear purpose." Lloyd George was convinced that "had Grey warned Germany in time of the point at which Britain would declare war..the issue would have been different. I know it is said that he was hampered by the divisions in the Cabinet but on one question, however, there was no difference of opinion-the invasion of Belgium..He could have intimated to the German government that if they put into operation their plan of marching through Belgium they would encounter the active hostility of the British Empire. And he could have uttered this warning in sufficient time to leave the German military authorities without any excuse for not changing their dust-laden plans." (i.e. the Schlieffen plan.) D. Lloyd George, *War memoirs*, I (London, 1933), pp.57-60 However, was it really a lack of "firm and clear purpose" or 'deliberate ambiguity'? The former Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, was more charitable, saying: "I have always believed that the war might have been avoided if Grey had been in a position to make a perfectly explicit statement to our conduct in certain eventualities..but that he could not venture to do so since he could not have got the support of the Cabinet if he had asked for it." Lansdowne to Lord Loreburn, April 28th 1919, Lansdowne MSS L(5) 30.I. This is not altogether convincing since, as mentioned, Grey did not seek cabinet approval for his eventual démarche to Prince Lichnowsky of July 29th and the cabinet never actually decided on war-"It was decided not to decide." (John Burns "critical cabinet" of July 29th.) The ultimate decision for war was-mirabile dictu- Grey's and Grey's alone. On this point vide, in particular: Keith Wilson, *Britain in Decisions For War*, p.201.

(45) Zara Steiner, *Britain and the Origins of the First World War*, London 1977, p.42.

(46) *ibid.*

(47) *ibid.* p.31.

(48) op.cit. Lowe, p.225.

(49) op.cit. Lichnowsky in *Decision, or Delusion or Deluge*, London, 1973, pp.102, 108-109.

(50) Zara Steiner, *Origins*, p.71.

(51) Paul Schroeder, *World War I As Galloping Gertie*, p.120

Interestingly, a contemporary neutral observer, the American President's special emissary, Colonel House, was convinced that England was the quasi 'éminence grise' *Hors de scène* and war would arise when England gave the word. House believed that Grey was playing a particularly devious game *pro bono Imperii Britannici*. While acknowledging the danger of militarism in Germany and elsewhere, he commented in a despatch to Wilson from Berlin in May 1914: "Unless someone is acting for you that can bring about a different understanding, there is some day to be an awful cataclysm..Whenever England consents, France and Russia will close in on Germany and Austria." C. Seymour, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, Boston, 1926, 1, p.249. Houses words are often quoted but often, significantly, without the reference to England and France as well as Russia, which would tend to substantiate Paul Schroeder's claim that there has been "too much whitewashing of France, Russia and British policy in this debate. In World War 1 As Galloping Gertie, *The Outbreak*..p.123.

PART II

- (52) In this connection vide Richard F. Hamilton, *On The Origins of the Catastrophe*, in *The Origins of World War 1*, pp. 469-506.
- (53) FO/1297, Ambassador Rumbold to Salisbury, d.92., April 27th, 1900.
- (54) FO/71/195, Goschen to Grey, d.22., March 8th 1907.
- (55) Conrad von Hötzen, *Aus Meiner Dienstzeit*, Bd. 11. p.282.
- (56) *ibid.* Bd. 1. p.305.
- (57) It was solely on account of Edward VII's death in May 1910 that the two monarchs never met again. A virtual agreement for Edward to visit Franz Joseph again had been reached the previous March.
- (58) FO371/825, Cartwright to Grey, d.9. January 1910.
- (59) vide, C.A. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire, 1790-1918.*, London 1968, p.805. Also: Konopište, *Franz Ferdinand's Bohemian Castle*, Prague, p.43. The fullest account of all the Archduke's plans for Imperial reform can be found in R. Kiszling's biography of Franz Ferdinand, Vienna 1953, p.250 et seq.
- (60) *op.cit.* Franz Joseph 1, *der Untergang eines Reiches*, Karl Tschuppik, Leipzig, n.d., p.492.
- (61) *ibid.*
- (62) Acton, *Essays on Church and State*, London, repr. 1952.
- (63) *ibid.* L. MSS Austria, Plunket to Lansdowne,pte. June 17th, 1902.
- (64) Grey MSS Austria, Russell to Tyrell,(March?) 1909, pte.
- (65) Berchtold MSS, Franz Ferdinand to Berchtold pte. October 1st, 1912.
- (66) FO371/825, Cartwright to Grey, d.86., August 1st 1910, minute
- (67) c, MSS, Hardinge to Cartwright, pte. February 8th 1910.
- (68) *op.cit.*, A. Corti, *Der alte Kaiser*, Grätz, 1960,p.114.
- (69) *op.cit.*, *The Case for The Central Powers*, Montgelas, p.72.
- (70) *op.cit.*, Corti, p.116.
- (71) Grey of Fallodon (Viscount), *Twenty-five Years, 1892-1916*, Vol. 11., p.168, London 1925.
- (71a) Kautsky, K. *Die Deutschen Dokumente zum Kriegsausbruch, 1914* nach gemeinsamer Durchsicht mit Karl Kautsky, edited by Count Max Monteglas and Prof. Walther Schücking, No. 401. Bd.4, Charlottenburg.
- (72) *Neue Freie Presse*, January 24th 1901.
- (73) FO371/1048, Russell to Grey d.219, December 22nd 1911. Mensdorff's verdict was that "the King had an instinctive touch for the right thing. achieving many of his so-called successes

- unconsciously and unintentionally", was later to receive general acceptance. PA VIII/145, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.29A, May 13th 1910.
- (74) PA VIII/144, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal d. 11A, March 17th 1910.
- (75) PA VIII/146 Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, pte. September 2nd 1910. infra, pp. 195-6. cf. Bt. MSS FO 800/179, Memorandum by Bertie, July 27th 1912.
- (76) PA VIII/146, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal pte. September 2nd, 1910; "So often allies, never foes."
- (77) Bd. MSS, Mensdorff to Berchtold pte, March 29th 1911. George had remarked that "if F.F. had it all his own way, it would not be like that." Almost certainly the King-like many British- misjudged the Archduke in this respect.
- (78) vide F Bridge, Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1972, p.13.
- (79) The Life of the Fourth Earl of Carnarvon, ii, p.85.
- (80) ibid. p.85. Typical of Salisbury was his remark to the French ambassador De Courcel when the latter remonstrated with him over French rights in the Bahr-el-Ghazal district adjoining the Sudan through which the French expeditionary force had passed from Fashoda on the Upper Nile under the command of Major Marchand: "Oui, vous avez raison, mais il faut vous en aller." André Mevil, De la Paix de Francfort à la Conférence d'Algeciras, p.31.
- (81) op.cit. A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918, Oxford 1954, p.342.
- (82) Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, iii, p.198. Significantly, Rosebery deplored the fact that "the Triple Alliance is in a somewhat parlous position being mutually suspicious which is the worst of signs." op.cit. Margaret M. Jefferson, p.98. Rosebery to Mallet, January 3rd 1894.
- (82a) Hansard, 1903, cxxxix, p.1348. Interestingly, the original scheme for a railway to the Persian Gulf had been British and German co-operation and participation had been actively considered. For a useful discussion of this question vide the chapter on the Baghdad Railway in G. Lowes Dickinson, The International Anarchy 1904-1914, London 1924, pp.231-256.
- (83) A. MSS Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, pte, June 17th 1907.
- (84) The Times, December 6th 1909, p. 11. cf. PA VIII/146, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, pte, September 2nd 1910.
- (85) PA VIII/146, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, pte. September 2nd 1910.
- (86) Scott MSS. 50901, memorandum by Scott, November 6th 1911.
- (87) B.D., x(1), No. 316, November 21st 1913, Grey's minute.
- (88) A. Chéradame, L'Europe et la question de l'Autriche au seuil du 20^{ème} siècle, Paris 1901, p.4. Albert Sorel, La question d'Orient au XVIII^{ème} siècle, Paris 1902, p.280.
- (89) PA VIII/143, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d. 44E, June 11th 1909. vide infra, p.104-5.
- (90) op.cit. A.J. P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p.213.
- (91) M. MSS K. iv, Tagebuch, December 7th 1905.
- (92) M. MSS K. i, Harding to Mensdorff, pte,(7), October 1906.
- (93) PA Xff/345, Berchtold to Aehrenthal d. 6D February 16th 1908.
- (94) ibid.
- (95) C. MSS Nicolson to Cartwright, pte, August 21st 1911.
- (96) op.cit. M. Pearce and G. Stewart, British Political History,

- 2nd. ed. London and New York, 1996, p.283.
- (97) C. MSS, Cartwright to Hardinge, December 7th 1910, copy.
- (98) Bt. MSS FO 800/179, Memorandum by Bertie, September 28th 1913.
- (99) op.cit. F. Bridge, Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, p.18.
- (100) A. MSS, Goschen to Grey, pte, April 19th 1907. vide also Z. Steiner, The last years of the old Foreign Office, p.59 et seq.
- (101) M. MSS K iv Tagebuch, February 12th 1909. infra. pp.179-80.
- (102) op.cit. M. Pearce and G. Stewart, British Political History, 2nd ed. London and New York, 1996, p.283.
- (103) op.cit. Z. Steiner, Britain and the Origins of the First World War, London 1977, p.42.
- (104) Luigi Albertini, The Origins of the War of 1914, Vol 1., p.531. In this respect Prince Lichnowsky was quite sanguine and exhibiting a particularly artful streak when he said of the Monarchy's 'embarrassments': "It is true we have to protect Austria but it is not in our interests to support her in an active Balkan policy in which we have everything to lose and nothing to gain. What advantage do you (Jagow, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) PROMISE YOURSELF from a strengthening of Austria's prestige in the Balkans or elsewhere?...Austria- I will not say a feeble Austria, but a frightened one- is a very convenient ally for us to have; the diminuation of Austrian influence in the Balkans has up to now been a factor of considerable advantage to our economic interest in that region." Lichnowsky to Jagow, pte., July 23rd, G.161.
- (105) Jagow to Lichnowsky, pte., July 18th 1913, G.72.
- (106) op.cit. Gustav, Graf Kalnoky, Österreich-Ungerns Aussenpolitik von 1881-1895, Doctoral Dissertation, Vienna, p.274
- (107) P/A. I/456, memorandum by Kalnoky, June 9th 1885.
- (108) P/A. I/456, memorandum drawn up for Count Taaffe, September. 1885.
- (109) ibid.
- (110) Aehrenthal MSS, Karton 2, Kalnoky to Aehrenthal, June 11th 1895.
- (111) ibid. May 3rd 1906.
- (112) ibid. Karton 4, Christina Thun to Aehrenthal, December 28th 1898.
- (113) P.A. I/461, Liasse XXV, Goluchowski to Deym, pte. and very secret, December 9th 1895.
- (114) Op. cit. Margaret M. Jackson, p.232. Lord Salisbury and the Eastern Question, SSEES Review, 1960.
- (115) Mensdorff MSS, Goluchowski to Mensdorff, Karton 10, November 1907, p.87.
- (116) op.cit. H Hantsch, Leopold. Graf Berchtold. Vol. 1., Grätz, 1963, p.136.
- (117) vide S. Wank, Aehrenthal's programme for the reorganisation of the Habsburg Monarchy, SSEES Review, 1960.
- (118) A.R. F. 19/19 Aehrenthal to Wekerle 14179 1/HP February 28th 1908.
- (118a) C. MSS Cartwright to Chauncey, pte. July 6th 1910, copy. As Prince Hohenlohe, the Austro-Hungarian military attache at St. Petersburg remarked in 1907, "Aehrenthal is quite a different cup of tea from Beck and Golu. The reins are in firm hands." Bd. MSS Hohenlohe to Berchtold, pte. May 19th 1907.
- (119) Op. cit. The Hapsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914, Arthur May,

- Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1951, p.457.
Specifically, Cartwright said that "Count Aehrenthal is so very 'authoritaire' that he allows none of his underlings to express any political views to foreign heads of mission during his absence from Vienna." C.MSS K. Cartwright to Chauncey, pte. July 6th 1910, copy.
- (120) MMSS K.iv, Tagebuch, October 31st 1908.
- (121) Cartwright to Chauncey, February 21st 1912 (C.MSS.)
- (122) P/A, VIII/147, Mensdorff to Berchtold, pte. February 20th 1912.
- (123) M, MSS K, i George V to Mensdorff, July 24th 1913.
- (124) Br, D. V. 500. Private letter from Hardinge to Nicolson, October 10th 1908.
- (125) PA VIII/141, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.53C, November 12th 1908. Rosebery, in fact, agreed with Aehrenthal when he said that "England-specifically Grey had Germany on the brain" and fully accepted the Austrian Minister's claim that he only intended "the Dual Monarchy to be a strong and independent state, faithful to its allies, but subservient to none." Rosebery could not agree more that "after all the insinuation which had so long been rife, as to Austria-Hungary being the tool of Germany, a move on his (Aehrenthal's part in the direction of complete independence of action should have been seized upon as an example of subservience.) PA XII/346 Aehrenthal to Mensdorff t. 13, March 3rd 1908.
- (126) PA VIII/147, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, pte, March 17th 1911.
- (127) PA VIII/141, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.66C, December 11th 1908, enc. Fitzmaurice to Mensdorff, copy.
- (128) Spender MSS 43692, Fitzmaurice to Morgan, July 31st 1914.
- (129) op.cit., May, The Habsburg Monarchy, p.459. Cartwright was to report to Grey that "in Berchtold Franz Ferdinand has gained a sympathetic ear, unlike previous ministers to whom his messages and telephone calls have caused such inconvenience and indeed at times distress." F.O. 371/825.
- (130) *ibid.*
- (131) *ibid.*
- (132) *ibid.* cf F.R.Bridge, From Sadowa to Sarajevo, THE Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, p.341
- (133) W.S. Churchill, The World Crisis, 6 vols. New York, 1923-31 vol.VI, pp.53-54.
- (134) G.P. Gooch, Before the War, 2 vols., London, Longmans, 1936-38, vol. II, p.374.
- (135) op.cit. C.A. Macartney, p.807. According to M. Karoly, Faith without Illusion, London, 1956, p.56, Berchtold's wife, a Karolyi herself, told him in October 1914 that "poor Leopold could not sleep on the day when he wrote the ultimatum to the Serbs, as he was so afraid that they might accept it." As early as January 1913, Cartwright had in fact reported "how exasperated people here (in Vienna) are getting at the continual worry which.. Serbia causes to Austria under encouragement from Russia." He added: "It may be compared to a certain extent to the trouble we had to suffer through the hostile attitude formerly assumed against us by the Transvaal Republic under the guiding hand of Germany." B.D. Vol. 9/2, No. 582. Later, in November, Berchtold had already concluded "that in view of the tenacity and confidence with which Serbia is pursuing the idea of a greater Serbia" only force would resolve the issue. This would "either destroy the present state of Serbia completely or shake Austria-Hungary to its foundations." Prophetic indeed. Berchtold to Czernin, November 26th, 1913, Ö.U.A., VII, 1930, pp. 588-9.

- (136) op.cit. F.R. Bridge, *The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary*, London, 1972, p.367.
- (137) "In matters where he had not secured successes Berchtold was silent", commented the Magyar leader, Count Julius Andrássy. In fact Berchtold was also attacked by practically all the leaders of the Monarchy's nationalities for his passivity during the Balkan Wars. op.cit., May, p.466. Mensdorff, visiting Vienna from London at this time, noted sadly "the indecision and helplessness of our excellent Leopold." Mensdorff MSS, Karton 4., Tagebuch, September 29th 1913.
- (138) H. Hantsch, *Gestalter*, op. cit., C.A. Macartney, p.809.
- (139) *ibid.* p.808.
- (140) Stephen Burian, *Austria in Dissolution*, Eng, trans., London 1925, pp. 247-8.
- (141) op.cit. A. May, *The Hapsburg Monarchy*, p.356.
- (142) Vide inter alia R.W. Seton-Watson, *Corruption and Reform in Hungary, a Study of Electoral Practice*, London 1911; *Political Persecution in Hungary, an Appeal to British Public Opinion*, London, 1906; *Absolutism in Croatia*, London 1912.
- (143) op.cit. David Angyal, Stephen Tisza, *Neue Österreichische Biographie*, 1815-1918, 8 vols., Vienna, 1923-35., Vol. 1., pp. 55-69. Domestic critics of the Hungarian Prime Minister likened him and the rest of his family to "chimney sweeps- the higher they climb, the blacker they get." *ibid.* A. May, p.353.
- (144) *ibid.* p.439.
- (145) H. Marczali, *Papers of Count Tisza, 1914-18*; in *American Historical Review* XXIX, pp.313-18, (January 1924)
- (146) op.cit. B.E. Schnitt, *The Coming of The War*, Vol.1., New York, 1930, p.75.
- (147) *IBID.* H. Marczali, *Papers of Count Tisza, 1914-18*, p.315.
- (148) Joseph Roth, *Radetskymarsch*, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, GmbH & Co., München, 1986, p.123.
- (149) op.cit., B.E. Schnitt, *The Coming of The War*, p.68.
- (150) Tisza's intelligence was as impressive as his aristocratic arrogance and obduracy was perverse. A classic representative of the ancien régime, Tisza was as much concerned with domestic relations as he was with international affairs, remarking (again) prophetically at the time of the Monarchy's greatest foe-Russia's descent into the maelstrom of revolution in 1917: "Do not be too pleased with this turn of events, it is a two-edged sword which may yet bring disaster to the world. Think what a seductive and distracting thought it must be for every rascal that he may live to become the ruler of a state! Every butcher's assistant will be asking himself why Russia should be the only country in which a workingman may become dictator?" op.cit. Albert Kaas and Fedor de Lazarovics, *Bolshevism in Hungary*, Grant Richards, 1931, p.18.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY THROUGH BRITISH EYES IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

- (1) L. Kellner with Madame Paula Arnold and Arthur Delisle, *Austria of the Austrians and Hungary of the Hungarians*, London 1914, p.1.
- (2) G.A.J. Cole, *The Gypsy Road*, London 1894, p.143.
- (3) R.L. Hodgson, *On Plain and Peak*, sporting and other sketches of Bohemia and Tyrol, London 1898, p.15.
- (4) *ibid.*, p.10.
- (5) P.E. Turnbull, *Austria*, London 1840, Vol II, p.393.
- (6) *ibid.*, p.394.
- (7) *ibid.*, p.397.
- (8) D.T. Anstead, *A Short Trip in Hungary and Transylvania in the Spring of 1862*, London 1862, pp.250-1.
- (9) J. Toulmin Smith, *Parallels between the Constitution and the Constitutional History of England and Hungary*, London 1849.
- (9a) P.E. Turnbull, *Austria*, Vol II, p.400.
- (10) "It became my deepest regret that I had not stood by the side of Petöfi like Madame Jókai in 1849...and helped bind up wounds, make cartridges and concoct savoury stews." H. Ellen Browning, *A Girl's Wanderings in Hungary*, London 1897, pp.1-2
- (11) *Hungary and Transylvania*, London 1839, Vol I, pp.2-3.
- (12) *The Eighty Club, Hungary, its People, Places and Politics*, London 1907, p.19.
- (13) *ibid.*, p.30.
- (14) Turnbull, Vol II, p.400.
- (15) *ibid.*, p.401.
- (16) Joseph de Jekélfalussy (ed.) *The Millenium of Hungary and its People*, Budapest 1897.
- (17) Louis Felberman, *British Tribute to Hungary and its King*, London 1907.
- (18) Louis Felberman, *Hungary and its People*, London 1892.
- (19) *op. cit.*, Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire*, Oxford 1967, p.345.
- (20) Louis Felberman, *British Tribute to Hungary and its King*, p.108. Felberman made a point of stressing that "the English were the special favourites of the Magyars." *ibid.*, p.118.
- (21) Louis Felberman, *Hungary and its People*, p.210.
- (22) *ibid.*, p.211. Felberman also maintained that in contrast to the brave and robust Magyars, the Slovaks were decidedly cowardly "so much so that a Magyar boy can often frighten a whole gang of Slovaks." *ibid.*
- (23) *The Millenium of Hungary and its People*, p.405. vide also C.N. Knatchbull-Hugesson, *The Political Development of the Hungarian Nation*, London 1908, Vol I, p.307 and John Paget, Vol I, p.82.
- (24) Arminius Vambéry, *Hungary*, London 1890, p.vii.
- (25) *ibid.*, p.412.
- (26) *ibid.*, p.413.
- (27) *ibid.*, p.440.
- (28) Knatchbull-Hugesson, Vol I, pp.300-7.
- (29) *ibid.*, p.307.
- (30) *ibid.*
- (31) vide for example Engels's article 'The Magyar Struggle' in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of January 13th 1849 (No.194.) "Among all the large and small nations of Austria, only three standard-bearers of progress took an active part in history,

and still retain their vitality- the Germans, the Poles and the Magyars. Hence they are now revolutionary. All the other large and small nationalities and peoples are destined to perish before long in the revolutionary world-storm. For that reason they are now counter-revolutionary." In two subsequent articles ('Democratic Pan-Slavism') Engels was even more damning of the Slavs, particularly the Croats, Serbs and Slovenes through their hostility to the Magyar revolutionaries. (NRZ, February 15th and 16th 1849, Nos 222 and 223. In Marx and Engels, Collected Works, Moscow 1977, pp. 230 and 368-71. Although Engels disclaimed any racial antipathy to the Slavs as such but only those "Slavs who betray the revolution", nevertheless both Engels and Marx were to be later somewhat embarrassed by these articles. The 'youthful exuberance' of the language they later ascribed partly to fear of the great Slavonic but despotic state of Russia and partly to suspicion of the Russian anarchist Bakunin's intrigues with slavonic peasants whom, he believed, (wrongly in Marx and Engels's eyes) represented a vast reservoir of untapped revolutionary potential.

(32) Geoffrey Drage, Austria-Hungary, London 1909, p.283.

(33) *ibid.*, p.284.

(34) *ibid.*, p.567. Drage was alluding to the plans of the Roumanian Federalist Auriel Popovici, whose magnum opus 'The United States of Greater Austria' impressed Drage as a potentially viable solution to the Empire's nationality problems. *vide also* pp.592-595. Popovici's work was known to have impressed the Heir-Apparent Franz Ferdinand.

(35) *ibid.*, p.568. Drage quotes with approval Lord Acton's dictum: "A State which cannot satisfy different races condemns itself, and if it labours to neutralize, absorb, or expel them it destroys its own vitality." *ibid.* p.565.

(36) *ibid.*, p.724.

(37) For a biography of Count Lützow, *vide* J.V. Polisensky, Francis Polisensky, 1849-1916, Slavonic and East European Review, November 1949, pp. 168-171.)

(38) Bohemian Section of the Austrian Exhibition, Earl's Court, London SW., Guide to the Bohemian Section, Prague 1908.

(39) Bohemia, an Historical Sketch by the Count Lützow, London 1909, p.347.

(40) *ibid.*, p.348.

(41) *ibid.*, p.350.

(42) *ibid.*, pp.350-1.

(43) C. Edmund Maurice, Bohemia, London 1896, p.vii.

(44) James Baker, A Forgotten Great Englishman; or the Life and Work of Peter Payne, the Wycliffite, London 1894. Austria: her People and their Homelands, London 1913; Pictures from Bohemia, drawn with pen and pencil, London 1894.

(45) Mandell Creighton, A History of Papacy, 6 vols., London 1897. H.H. Milman, History of Latin Christianity, 6 vols., 1854-6. The fourth edition had risen to 9 vols., and was published in 1867. James Bryce, The Holy Roman Empire, London 1864.

(46) W.Coxe, History of the House of Austria, London 1807; fourth edition, London 1853.

(47) E. Vehsel, Memoirs of the Court and Aristocracy of Austria 2 vols., London 1856; second edition, London 1889.

- (48) Louis Leger, *History of Austria-Hungary*, London 1889.
- (49) Sidney Whitman, *The Realm of the Habsburgs*, London 1893, pp. 1-2.
- (50) A point which the Emperor Franz Joseph was to make at the turn of the century, obliquely if not directly: "I know that we are an anomaly amongst the states of Europe." Not, however, the only one- Tsarist Russia was in a similar position.
- (51) *Austria*, Sidney Whitman, London 1898, p.3.
- (52) *The Realm of the Habsburgs*, p.302.
- (53) *ibid.*, pp.302-3.
- (54) *Austria of the Austrians and Hungary of the Hungarians*, p.179.
- (55) Francis Palmer, *Austro-Hungarian Life in Town and Country*, p.125.
- (56) *ibid.*, p.97.
- (57) pp.57, 89-90. One of the curious consequences of this animosity between Magyars and Roumanians in Transylvania was the latter's opposition to education "as education would lead inevitably to Magyarization." *ibid.* A point impressed on Palmer by a Roumanian mayor.
- (58) *ibid.*, p.166.
- (59) *ibid.*, p.167.
- (60) He finally did so in 1897. vide Victor Tapié, *The Rise and Fall of the Habsburg Monarchy*, London 1971, p.365.
- (61) *Austro-Hungarian Life in Town and Country*, *ibid.*, p.234.
- (62) *ibid.*, p.174.
- (63) Karl Kraus, *The Last Days of Mankind*, Vienna 1924, p.102. cf. *Die Fackel*, July 10th 1914: "our Austrian laboratory of the Apocalypse." op. cit., Frederic Morton, *Thunder at Twilight*, Vienna 1913/14, New York 1989, p.293.
- (64) *Austro-Hungarian Life in Town and Country*, p.72.
- (65) *ibid.*, p.213.
- (66) *ibid.*, p.248.
- (67) Francis Gribble, *The Life of the Emperor Francis Joseph*, London 1914; *A Keystone of Empire*, Francis Joseph of Austria, London and New York 1904. (Anon.) Vide also R. Mahaffy, *The Emperor Franz Joseph*, London 1910.
- (68) Francis Gribble, *The Life of the Emperor Francis Joseph*, p.vi.
- (69) *ibid.*, p.28.
- (70) *ibid.*, p.34.
- (71) *ibid.*, pp.346-347.
- (72) *ibid.*, pp.345-346.
- (73) *ibid.*, p.346.
- (74) *A Keystone of Empire*. London and New York, 1904. Vide especially pp.281-284.
- (75) *ibid.*, p.274.
- (76) *ibid.*, p.321.
- (77) J.W. Gilbert-Smith, *The Cradle of the Habsburgs*, London 1907, p.140.
- (78) R. Mahaffy, *The Emperor Franz Joseph*, London 1910; G.E. Mitton, *Austria-Hungary*, London 1914.
- (79) H.W. Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, London 1924, Vol. I, p.273.
- (80) *The Times*, August 1918. cf. *War and Peace*, August 1918.
- (81) C. Edmund Maurice, *Bohemia*, London 1896, pp. vii-viii.
- (82) *A Forgotten Great Englishman, or the Life and Work of Peter Payne, the Wycliffite*, London 1894, footnote on p.36.

(83) Count Lützow, *The Story of Prague*, London 1902, p. xviii.

(84) op. cit., A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918*, Oxford 1954, p.284.

(85) op. cit., Harry Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary During the First World War*, London 1962, p.10. However, Palmerston had also been fulsome in his praise of Austria as an essential element in the 'Balance of Power' and declared in a speech in 1849 that "every Englishman ought to deprecate and try to prevent anything" which tended "to wreck and to cripple Austria." op. cit. Wilfred Frest, *Peace or Partition*, London 1978, p.1.

NOTES TO CHAPTER

11.

HENRY WICKHAM STEED AND ROBERT
SETON-WATSON

- (1) H.W. Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, Vol I. p.3., London 1924. This is the first volume of Steed's two volume autobiography.
- (2) H.W. Steed, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, London 1913. vide also fourth edition 1919.
- (3) op. cit. Wilfred Fest, *Peace or Partition*, London 1978, p.14.
- (4) Preface to the fourth edition, p.xi.
- (5) *ibid.*, p.xx.
- (6) *ibid.*, pp.xxii-xxiii.
- (7) *The Habsburg Monarchy*, Preface to the fourth edition, pp. xxii-xxiii.
- (8) *ibid.* pp.7-8. Interestingly Steed ventured to suggest that: "Monarchy and Democracy are not antithetical terms and that a crowned democracy may be as efficient a guarantee of individual right and social liberty as any republic." In fact he went on: "...tyranny is more likely to come from oligarchies...economic oligarchies...Against such tyranny the natural ally of the people is, or might be, the Crown. Parliament is not sufficient safeguard, for parliaments can be bought, influenced, or gerrymandered into conscious or inadvertent alliance with the economic princes of the world." *ibid.* p.xxiv. All in all this has a curiously modern ring about it.
- (9) *The Habsburg Monarchy*, Preface to the first edition, p.xiii.
- (10) Preface, p.x.
- (11) *The Habsburg Monarchy*, fourth edition, pp.1,5.
- (12) *The Habsburg Monarchy*, p.xvii. Steed also quotes with evident approval the Austrian essayist Ferdinand Kürnberger's remarks in 1871: "What is incomprehensible to every non-Austrian, nay, the eternally unintelligible about Austria, is the Asiatic in Austria." However: "Austria is not really unintelligible. It must be comprehended as a kind of Asia. 'Europe' and 'Asia' are very precise ideas. Europe means Law: Asia means arbitrary rule. Europe means respect for facts; Asia means the purely personal. Europe is the man; Asia is at once the old man and the child. With this key you may solve all Austrian riddles." (Siegelringe, 1st edition, pp220-225) op. cit., Steed, p.xix.
- (13) *The Habsburg Monarchy*, p.8.
- (14) *ibid.*
- (15) 'The Quintessence of Austria', *Edinburgh Review*, October 1915, pp.250-1.
- (16) *The Habsburg Monarchy*, Preface to fourth edition, p.xiii.
- (17) op. cit. F.R.Bridge, *From Sadowa to Sarajevo*, *The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1866-1914*, London 1972, p.270.
- (18) Published in Paris.
- (19) Vide in particular: *The Edinburgh Review*, October 1915, pp. 225-47; April 1916, pp.373-92; January 1917, pp.1-22; October 1917, pp.364-85. Also *The New Europe*, January 10th 1918. The leading articles in *The Times* of December 30th and October 31st 1918 were also probably written by Steed or at least strongly influenced by him.
- (20) Memorandum (undated, 1912?), Steed papers, P.H.S.
- (21) *The Habsburg Monarchy*, p.17.
- (22) *ibid.* p.13.
- (23) *ibid.* p.209.
- (24) *ibid.* p.208.

- (25) The Habsburg Monarchy, pp.208-9.
- (26) *ibid.* p.295.
- (27) *ibid.*
- (28) *ibid.*p.211.
- (29) Through Thirty Years, Vol.I, pp.324-5, and the Doom of the Habsburgs, London 1937, p.90.
- (30) Through Thirty Years, Vol.I, p.325.
- (31) The Habsburg Monarchy, p.!!.
- (32) Letters to Dawson, November 28th 1912 and April 25th 1913, History of The Times, iv, pp.83, 104.
- (33) Through Thirty Years, i, p.365 (extract from letter to Dawson, January 5th 1913).
- (34) The Habsburg Monarchy, Preface to the fourth edition, p.x.
- (35) "The influential Englishman" that Steed wrote to is not known but it could hardly be Seton-Watson since he was a Scot. L'Angleterre et La Guerre, Paris 1915, pp.13-14.
- (36) Reginald Pound and Geoffrey Harmsworth, Northcliffe, London 1959, p.424.
- (37) 'Austria and Europe', Edinburgh Review, January 1917, pp. I-22, and 'What is Austria?' Edinburgh Review, October 1917, pp.364-85. Vide also the New Europe, January 10th 1917.
- (38) *ibid.* p.365.
- (39) *ibid.* p.377.
- (40) Through Thirty Years, Vol.II, p.38.
- (41) 'What is Austria?' Edinburgh Review, October 1917, p.377.
- (42) *ibid.*
- (43) Through Thirty Years, Vol.I, pp.359-60.
- (44) *ibid.* Vol.II, pp.49-50.
- (45) Through Thirty Years, Vol.I. pp.26-31, 40. 185-6, and The History of The Times, The The Times, London 1939-52, Vol.IV, pp.481-2,
- (46) "The creation of as many moderately strong states as possible will prevent the establishment of any kind of hegemony in Europe-German or other." The History of The Times, Vol.IV, pp.237-8.
- (47) L'Angleterre et la Guerre, pp.13-14, and Through Thirty Years, Vol.II, pp.2-3.
- (48) Through Thirty Years, Vol.II, pp.130-31. Voska, Masaryk's special emissary, was to make Steed's office his first port of call when he came to England. vide Through Thirty Years, Vol.II, pp.41-7.
- (49) For details on Robert Seton-Watson's life vide The Making of a New Europe, R.W.Seton-Watson and the Last Years of Austria-Hungary, Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, London 1981, pp.1-20. Also R.R.Betts's obituary notice in the Slavonic and East European Review, December 1951, pp.252-5; 'Tributes to R.W. Seton-Watson: A Symposium', by H.W.Steed, Dame Lilian Penson, W.J.Rose Curcin, Lev Sychrava and V.V.Tilea in the Slavonic and East European Review, June 1952, pp.331-63; George Glasgow R.W.Seton-Watson, Contemporary Review, September 1951, pp.179-82.
- (50) Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor, London 1902.
- (51) Gertrude Schopf, Die Österreichische-ungarische Monarchie and Seton-Watson, Ph.D. Thesis, Vienna 1953, p.158.
- (52) 'Tributes to R.W.Seton-Watson: A Symposium' (Steed) The Slavonic and East European Review, June 1952, p.332.
- (53) Racial Problems in Hungary, London 1908, pp.xiv-xvii.
- (54) The Making of a New Europe, p.31.

(55) Louis Eisenmann, *Le Compromis Austro-Hongrois*, Paris 1904. André Chéradame was to become one of the foremost critics of Germany's plans for 'Mitteleuropa', as he viewed them, saying that the Pan-Germans had actively sought for years to subvert the Monarchy and turn it into a pliant tool for their wider ambitions in the Near East. This was the Monarchy's tragedy: From being a protector of British and French interests it had become a weapon against them. *Le Projet Pangermaniste Desmasque*, Paris 1916.

(56) *The Future of Austria-Hungary*, p.61. Seton-Watson's conclusion was in fact that "a dissolution was neither probable nor possible." *ibid.*

(57) *ibid.*, p.35.

(58) *ibid.*, p.4-8.

(59) *ibid.*, pp.31-4.

(60) *ibid.*, p.35.

(61) *ibid.*, pp.21-4.

(62) *ibid.*

(63) *The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy*, London 1911, p.177.

(64) *op.cit.* *The Making of a New Europe*, R.W.Seton-Watson and *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary*, p.40.

(65) *The Future of Austria-Hungary*, *ibid.* pp.21-4.

(66) *The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy*, Dedication.

(67) *op. cit.* *The Making of a New Europe*, pp.75-6.

(68) *ibid.* p.76.

(69) *The Southern Slav Question*, pp.336-7: *The Future of Austria-Hungary*, p.53. Dušan was the Serbian ruler of the 14th century who came to the throne by murdering his father- *dušati*= to strangle.

(70) *The Making of a New Europe*, p.76.

(71) *The Future of Austria-Hungary*, p.75.

(72) *Racial Problems In Hungary*, p.418 vide also *Absolutismus in Kroatien*, p.4.

(73) *The Future of Austria-Hungary and the Attitude of the Great Powers*, London 1907, p.19, and *Corruption and Reform*, a study of electoral practice. Seton-Watson had been much impressed by the Empire's capacity for internal reform in spite of all the grave dangers that faced it by the grant of universal suffrage in Austria in 1907: "It represents", he wrote, "a genuine effort to reduce racial friction to a minimum, and thus the lines of party cleavage from racial to political and social questions." *The Future of Austria-Hungary*, p.10.

(74) *Racial Problems in Hungary*, p.418. In a letter to Professor Esterhazy on February 25th 1907 Seton-Watson had said: "With regard to the nationalities, the usual Magyar point of view has greatly disappointed me, as it seems to me extremely immoderate and intransigent." *op. cit.* *The Making of a New Europe*, p.41. In his view accusations that demands for democratic reform were equivalent to 'incitement against the Magyar nation' were completely unproven." *ibid.*

(75) *Racial Problems in Hungary*, p.405.

(76) *The Future of Austria-Hungary*, p.24.

(77) *ibid.*,

(78) Seton-Watson to Professor Esterhazy, February 25th 1907, *op. cit.* *The Making of a New Europe*, p.41.

- (79) The Southern Slav Question, p.405.
- (80) Austria-Hungary and the Federal Solution, Contemporary Review, March 1918, p.258.
- (81) Europe in the Melting-Pot, London 1919, p.vi.
- (82) Seton-Watson gave a detailed account of the trial in the form of a letter which was common at this time, since editors would willingly print letters of even 2000 words: they had the advantage of being unpaid, space was abundant and newsprint cheap. This letter was actually signed 'Seton' by which he was commonly known by his friends, although in letters to the Spectator he continued to use the pseudonym 'Scotus Viator'. His real identity had in fact become known after the publication of his book Racial Problems in Hungary. Although dated June Seton-Watson had in fact left Zagreb for Vienna on May 26th.
- (83) The Southern Slav Question, p.viii.
- (84) R.W.Seton-Watson and the Yugoslavs: Correspondence I,15.
- (85) The Southern Slav Question, p.viii.
- (86) London 1912.
- (87) op.cit. The Making of a New Europe, p.91. Correspondence, I,73. (Letter of January 19th) Two months earlier Smodlaka had impressed on Seton-Watson that "the war is for the whole of Europe a matter of world-wide importance. For us it is a national resurrection. Austria will be forced to change its policy. Serbia has given proof not only of great military valour but also of a surprising political maturity. Now we are sure that we shall not be trampled down by the Magyars. The future of a million Yugoslavs is guaranteed." Smodlaka to Seton-Watson, November 6th, Correspondence I,p.57.
- (88) Correspondence I,12.
- (89) Published in Leipzig and Berlin in 1912 and 1913 respectively, they were revised and enlarged translations of the English editions.
- (90) Gertrude Schopf, Die Österreichische-ungarische Monarchie und Seton-Watson, Ph.D. thesis, Vienna, 1953,p.80.
- (91) Quoted in Europe in the Melting-Pot,p.viii.
- (92) op.cit. Goloman, Deutsche Geschichte, Berlin 1989, p.75. One is reminded too of Napoleon's famous remark that L'Autriche est toujours en retard- d'une idée, d'une année et d'une armée." (Austria is always late- with an idea, by a year and with an army.)
- (93) Joseph Baernreither, Fragmente eines politischen Tagebuches, Berlin 1928,p.253.
- (94) Taken directly from Seton-watson's contemporary pencil-written notes. op.cit. The Making of a New Europe, p.96.
- (95) ibid, The actual words in German were:"Es war eine grosse Geschmacklosigkeit von den Herren, dass sie überhaupt nach Europa gekommen sind." op.cit. as above.
- (96) 'Der verlorenen Hoffnung, die tiefbetrübten Slowaken! ibid. IOI.
- (97) Contemporary Review, August 1914.
- (98) 'Austria-Hungary as a Balkan Power', Contemporary Review, December 1912,pp.801-5.
- (99) 'New Phases of the Balkan Question', Contemporary Review, September 1913, pp.322-3.
- (100) ibid.p.326.
- (101) ibid,p.327.
- (102) ibid.p.328.

(IO3) Interestingly, Seton-Watson considered that a Balkan Federation under the presidency of the King of Roumania might be an answer to the region's problems. 'New Phases of the Balkan Question', Contemporary Review, September 1913, pp. 328-30, and 'Austria-Hungary as a Balkan Power', Contemporary Review, December 1912, p.806.

(IO4) Seton-Watson to May, op. cit. The Making of a New Europe, pp. 101-2.

(IO5) Europe in the Melting-Pot, pp.viii-ix, Roumania and the Great War, London 1915, p.56, and The Pall Mall Gazette, December 15th 1916.

(IO6) The Spectator, August 15th 1914.

(IO7) *ibid.*

(IO8) *ibid.* August 20th.

(IO9) The War and Democracy, London 1914, pp.255-6.

(IO10) Roumania and the Great War, p.56.

(IO11) What is at Stake in the War, London 1915.

(IO12) *vide in particular* Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, Chapter VII, pp.174-202. Harry Hanak.

(IO13) What is at Stake in the War, London 1915, pp.65-6.

(IO14) *ibid.* p.70.

(IO15) German, Slav, and Magyar, p.130.

(IO16) *ibid.* p.186, and 'The Pan-German Plan and its Antidote', Contemporary Review, April 1916, p.428.

(IO17) Slovak Peasant Art and Melodies, London 1911, p.iii. This work is in fact a lengthy reprinted extract from Racial Problems in Hungary.

(IO18) Tih. R.Georgevitch, 'Kossovo, 1389', in Kossovo Day Committee, Kossovo Day (1389-1916), London 1916, p.9.

On September 27th, The Serbian Society which had been founded at Seton-Watson's house in Buckingham Street, London the previous July, sent out its prospectus to all the major newspapers, declaring quite unequivocally: "How many people in the British Empire understood, in July 1914, that the Austro-German attack upon Serbia was directed in reality at the British Empire! How many perceived that it was designed by securing the Austro-German road to the East, to undermine our position in Egypt and India? Very few...Hence the need for real understanding of the position of Serbia (as) the European gate to the East." Observer, October 1st 1916.

(IO19) For details on the UDC *vide* Harry Hanak, Great Britain and Austria-Hungary During The First World war, in particular, pp.151-6. *Vide* Chapter on the Outbreak of war: "It does not follow, even if a majority of the people in Bohemia, Finland, Ireland, Slavonia, Transylvania, Bessarabia, or the Ukraine, desire a separate State that the war should continue till they can have exactly what they want." Common Sense, June 16th 1917.

(IO20) The Times, April 23rd 1915.

(IO21) The Future of Bohemia, London 1915, p.31.

(IO22) German, Slav, and Magyar, p.170.

(IO23) 'Wanted a Foreign Policy', New Europe, December 14th 1916.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

ANGLO-AUSTRIAN RELATIONS 1880-1908

(1) Instructions to Count Kálnoky, February 7th, 1880. op. cit. The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary 1879-1914, VOL. II, Dr. A.F. Pribram, trans. by J.D'Arcy Paul and D.P. Myers, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1921, p.5.

(2) *ibid.*

(3) *ibid.*

(4) Despatch from Kálnoky to Haymerle, February 17th 1880, *ibid.* p.7.

(5) *ibid.* p.10.

(6) The Treaty's clauses were explicitly defensive-thus the Preamble declared its purpose to be "to secure the unimpaired maintenance of the social and political order in the respective states of the signatory powers against any disturbance of the peace from within and without." First Treaty of The Triple Alliance in The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary, p.40.

(7) op.cit. E. von Reventlow, Deutschland's auswärtige Politik 1888 bis 1913, p.11,

(8) Report of Crown Prince Rudolf vis-à-vis his interview with Bismarck, March 1st 1883.

(9) Sterneck to Richard Sterneck in Vienna, March 3rd 1886, Sterneck: Erinnerungen, p.233. With regard to the Bulgarian crisis of 1885-1886 a brief résumé may be in order here: In September 1885 a revolution in Eastern Roumelia (Southern Bulgaria) led to a declaration of union with Bulgaria under Prince Alexander of Battenberg- a move which directly violated the provisions of the Congress of Berlin of 1878. At first the British Prime Minister Salisbury's inclination was to support Austria's view that a new congress should be called to rescind the move as Bismarck had originally suggested..However, after some reflection Salisbury came to the conclusion that since Alexander was so obviously persona non grata with the Russians there was little danger of the new Bulgarian state becoming a Russian satellite- in fact the converse: it would be a useful obstacle to Russia's road to Constantinople. Eventually a compromise agreement was reached on lines suggested by Salisbury to which Austria, somewhat reluctantly, and the other Great Powers gave their assent. The two states were to remain nominally separate but the Bulgarians were allowed to elect Alexander as Prince of both of them- thus, to all intents and purposes, Bulgaria was now one. (Vide Figure 1)

(10) Cedric J. Lowe: Salisbury and The Mediterranean, 1886-1896, pp.8-25. According to Lowe the nine points included in Salisbury's Note "were literally translated word for word" from an earlier version proposed by Karolyi. the Austro-Hungarian ambassador and Cataloni, the Italian ambassador. London, December 12th 1887. Text in Cedric J. Lowe: The reluctant Imperialists, British Foreign Policy, 1878-1902, Vol.2, pp.61-62.

(11) In June 1881 the British Mediterranean fleet had visited Trieste shortly after France's annexation of Tunis. vide Jahresbericht der K.K. Kriegsmarine (1881), p.19.

(12) The Anatomy of British Sea-Power: A History of British Naval Policy in the Pre-Revolutionary Era, 1880-1905, New York. Alfred P. Koolt, 1910, p.171.

(13) op. cit. A.F. Pribram, Austria-Hungary and Great Britain, London 1951, p.55.

(14) op.cit. A.J.P.Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe,

1848-1918, Oxford 1954, p.342.

(15) op.cit. A.F. Pribram, Austria-Hungary and Great Britain, p.55.

(16) ibid.

(17) ibid.

(18) ibid.

(19) Cedric-Lowe: Salisbury and The Mediterranean Agreements, 1886-96, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1965.

(20) J.A.S. Grenville: Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy: the Close of the 19th Century, London 1964, p.44.

(21) vide supra.

(22) Via the British ambassador Goluchowski specifically mentioned Kalnoky's letter of October 25th 1887 to the British government regarding the Mediterranean Agreements. vide Margaret Je Jefferson, Lord Salisbury and the Eastern Question 1890-1898, Slavonic and East European Review, 39, 1960, p.229.

(23) Theodore Rapp:: The Development of a Modern Navy, French Naval Policy 1871-1904, edited by Stephen Roberts, Anapolis Mid-Naval Institute Press 1887, p.205.

(24) Margaret Jefferson, p.237. op.cit. Although disheartened, Goluchowski, nevertheless, continued to hope that if Russia did dare to attack the Straits "the British guns might yet go off by themselves." p.258. However, Goluchowski was soon to be disabused of this hope.

(25) Aehrenthal MSS, Karton I, Hengelmüller (letter of Aehrenthal to), May 26th 1897.

(26) P.A. XX/68, Goluchowski to Wolkenstein, Tel.8., March 13th 1898. Aehrenthal MSS, Karton I, Hengelmüller to Aehrenthal, May 12th 1898.

(27) F.O. 7/1297, Rumbold to Salisbury, No.11, confidential.

(28) For the actual wording of this article which was markedly vague and ambiguous vide British Documents on the Origins of the War, ed. G.P. Gooch and H.W.V. Temperley, London 1928, Vol.5, p.66.

(29) F.O. 371/581. Nicolson to Grey, No.63, February 4th 1908.

(30) B.D., 5, No.180.

(31) F.O. 371/581. Nicolson to Grey, private telegram, February 17th 1908.

(32) Hardinge MSS, Vol.13, Hardinge to Goschen, April 7th 1908.

(33) Hardinge MSS, Vol.10, Groschen to Hardinge, May 23rd 1907.

(34) op.cit. A.F. Pribram, Austria-Hungary and Great Britain 1908-1914. O.U.P., London 1951, p.56.

(35) This is not to say that Austria-Hungary had no colonial ambitions: vide F.R. Bridge, 'Tarde venientibus ossa: Austro-Hungarian colonial aspirations in Asia-Minor, 1913-14', Middle Eastern Studies, October 1970.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV
THE BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA CRISIS
(1908-1909)

- (1) A. Fournier, *Wie wir zu Bosnien kamen*, Vienna, 1909, p.64. et seq. Caratheodory Pasha, *Le rapport secret sur le congres de Berlin*, Paris 1919, p.164 et seq.
- (2) op. cit. F. Pribam, *Austria-Hungary and Great Britain*, trans. by F.D. Morrow, O.U.P., 1951, p.95.
- (3) *ibid.*
- (4) *ibid.*
- (5) A similar plan was mooted in 1882. cf. Robert Seton-Watson, *Russian commitments in the Bosnian Question and an early project of annexation*. *Slavonic Review*, VIII, p.586 et seq. Also op. cit. Bernadotte E. Schnitt, *The Annexation of Bosnia, 1908-9*, Cambridge University Press, 1937, p.3. n.2 Schnitt examines the controversy over what actually was said between Izvolsky and Aehrenthal at Buchlau in Chapter II. Further reading is also given there.
- (6) *Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik 1908-14*. Also reproduced in Sir Sidney Lee, *King Edward VII*, Vol II, p.632.
- (7) *ibid.*
- (8) *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1908-14*, V, d.273. Whitehead to Grey, September 30th 1908.
- (9) *Br. D.*, V, Bertie to Grey, October 3rd 1908.
- (10) Hardinge to Mensdorff, *ibid.*, October 2nd 1908.
- (11) A similar declaration was made by Asquith in the House of Commons on October 12th 1908. *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914*, XXVI/I, d. 9035.
- (12) *Br. D.*, V, p.302. Grey to Goschen, October 5th 1908. cf. Grey of Fallodon, *Twenty-Five Years*, I, p.175, where he gives his view of the annexation: "A cruel blow it seemed to the budding hopes of better things in Turkey. Besides this, it was the alteration of an European treaty to which other Powers as well as Turkey were parties. To us the territorial changes were indifferent, it mattered not to us that Austria should annex instead of merely occupying Bosnia and Herzegovina, but besides sympathy with the new hope in Turkey we felt that the arbitrary alteration of an European treaty by one Power without the consent of the others who were parties to it struck at the root of all good international order." The actual instructions that Grey gave Goschen on October 5th are given here.
- (13) *Br. D.*, V, 289. Goschen to Grey, October 4th 1908.
- (14) *ibid.* d.299. Grey to Goschen, October 5th 1908.
- (15) *ibid.* d.381 Goschen to Grey, October 14th 1908.
- (16) op. cit Pribam, p.97.
- (17) *ibid.*
- (18) *Br.D.*, V, d.318. Goschen to Grey, October 6th 1908.
- (19) *ibid.*
- (20) *ibid.* d.330. Grey to Goschen, October 7th 1908.
- (21) Grey had emphasized this point in a party speech to his constituents on October 7th. cf. G.P.Gooch, *History of Modern Europe*, p.415.
- (22) *Br.D.*, V, 296. Grey to Lowther, October 5th 1908.
- (23) *Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik*, I, d.228, Mensdorff to Foreign Ministry, October 10th 1908.
- 24) Quoted in Lee, op. cit., Vol II, p.633 et seq.
- 25) *ibid.*

- (26) This is the view advanced in Nintchitch, *La crise bosniaque 1908-9 et les puissances Europeenes*, 2 Vols., 1934, I, p.346.
- (27) Br.D., V, d. 397. Goschen to Grey, October 19th 1908.
- (28) *ibid.* Goschen also reported Franz Joseph as saying: "Serbia threatens all sorts of things- but I have taken no military measures whatever- and I do not intend to do so unless insult gives place to direct aggression." Goschen added that in his final audience with the Emperor before returning to England Franz Joseph had declared "that Serbia continued to be the black spot on the horizon" and that while "His Majesty hoped that all would go well..the Serbians must not push things too far, as Austria-Hungary had already pushed patience to the verge of imprudence." cf. Br.D., V, Goschen to Grey, November 5th 1908.
- (29) *Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik*, I, d.228. Dispatch from London, October 10th 1908. Also Br.D., V, d.338, Lowther to Grey, October 8th 1908.
- (30) Br.D., V, d.350. Grey to Lascelles, October 9th 1908.
- (31) O.U.A., I, d.335. Telegram to London, October 19th 1908.
- (32) *ibid.* d.347. A private letter to Aehrenthal from Archduke Franz Ferdinand, October 20th 1908, cf. Nintchitch, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 161.
- (33) Br.D., V, d.362. Lowther to Grey, October 12th 1908, with a Minute by Sir Louis Mallet.
- (34) *ibid.* d.407. Grey to Goschen, October 26th 1908.
- (35) O.U.A., I, d.441. Telegram to London, October 28th 1908.
- (36) *ibid.*, d.453 and 454. Dispatches from London, October 30th 1908. Throughout October there were discussions in the Foreign Office on the possibility of adding Spizza and the two Turkish enclaves of Suttorina and Klerk on the Dalmatian coast to Montenegro and Kossovopolje, or at least an important part of it (including the famous 'Field of Sparrows', where the Serbian army was defeated by the Turks in 1389), to Serbia. However it was felt that Aehrenthal would scarcely agree to this plan and later all the Great Powers were to concur with Great Britain that Turkey should not suffer any more losses at the hands of the two South Slav states. cf. H.Löbbing, *Englands Stellung zur bosnischen Krise*, p.45.
- (37) *ibid.*, d.489. Dispatch from London, November 3rd 1908.
- (38) *ibid.*, d.489. However, Aehrenthal was perhaps not quite as sanguine as he made out, as the following incident illustrates. On November 3rd Mensdorff reported to Aehrenthal that the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Rome had sent him a telegram declaring that the Italian Foreign Minister, Tittoni had said that if Austria-Hungary refused to accept a conference then Great Britain was prepared to withdraw its ambassador from Vienna and even send a naval squadron to the Adriatic. While both Mensdorff and the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Rome cast doubts on the seriousness of this statement, Aehrenthal became extremely agitated, saying: "It is unheard of that England should take upon herself to force a Great Power to take part in a conference and that for this reason she is ready to recall her ambassador. As to the projected naval demonstration in the Adriatic we are certainly not to be

placed on the same footing as the old Turkey whom one was accustomed to terrify by such methods."

- (39) *ibid.* d.513 and d.514. Telegrams to London, November 6th 1908. Goschen said goodbye to both Aehrenthal and the Emperor on November 5h. cf.Br.D.,V,428 and 429. Franz Joseph was evidently quite moved saying "that he was exceedingly sorry that I (Goschen) was leaving Vienna just when affairs were in rather an unsettled state and when there were some differences of opinion on certain matters between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain." But the Emperor added:"We are such old and good friends that I am sure that any slight misunderstanding that may now exist will soon pass away, and we shall be as good friends as ever."
- (40) Aehrenthal's state of mind at this time can be gauged from several caustic remarks which he made to Goschen at the beginning of November. Such, for example, was his comment: "You people in England are incurring a great responsibility and the Russians too." When he was told that he should not underestimate Britain's power and influence, he angrily retorted:"What can England do to us?"cf. Gooch, *Before the War*, Vol I, p.402 and Lee, *op. cit.* I,p.644. Also O.U.A. I, d.644. Aide-Memoire for English Charge d'Affaires in Vienna, November 25th 1908.
- (41) *ibid.*,d.590. Dispatch from London, November 17th 1908 and d.565. Instruction to London, November 13th 1908.
- (41a) That Britain did not want war, however, can be seen from the British government's reaction to the news of a projected alliance between Turkey and Serbia, obviously directed against Austria-Hungary. In instructions marked 'very confidential' Sir Edward Grey informed the British Minister in Belgrade, Mr. Whitehead that "His Majesty's government could not give official countenance to any convention specifically directed against any Power or Powers designated by name. We are very anxious to see the establishment of the closest and most friendly relations between the Balkan states and Turkey, as the surest means of promoting peace in the Near and of preventing any further encroachments, but the Convention as now drafted would defeat that object since it is directed against Bulgaria as well as Austria. Any agreement concluded by Servia with Turkey and the other Balkan states should be of a purely defensive character. I do not see how any agreement can secure the Balkan peninsula against aggression unless Bulgaria is on its side and a combination which forced Bulgaria into alliance with Austria would never secure peace or be strong. cf. Br.D.,V, d.468.
- (42) O.U.A. I, d.662. Dispatch from Mensdorff in London, November 27th 1908.
- (43) *ibid.* d.662.
- (44) Br.D.,V, d.412 and 416. On October 27th 1908 Grey wrote to Nicolson:"I have not, myself much sympathy with the clamour of Serbia and Montenegro for territorial compensation. If they are afraid of the Austrian advance, they had better sit still, put their own houses in order, make friends with Turkey, and hope that she will get strong under

the new régime." However, Grey was to say something quite different to the Serbian Foreign Minister, Milanović a few days later when he openly voiced sympathy for Serbia's aspirations. Grey's lack of consistency here is to be found in his desire not to offend the Russians. Thus, in the letter to Nicolson he added: "I do not want to cold-shoulder Izvolsky on the Serbian Question, if the Russians are keen about it, and I will do my best to support him." Also O.U.A., I, d.587. Telegram from London, November 16th 1908.

- (45) Aehrenthal was to continually protest against the widespread impression that he was a 'pawn' in the hands of Germany for fulfilling that power's ambitions in the Near East. This has been the view of many historians. vide Ernst Kabisch, *England und die Annexionskrise, 1908-9*. In the *Berliner Monatshefte*, October 1930, p.915 et seq. cf. also O.H.Weddel, *Austro-German Diplomatic Relations, 1908-14*, p.65, where the sources are cited. In his essay 'L'Autriche et l'avant guerre' in the *Revue de Paris*, April-June 1921, Crozier remarks that the Austrian Foreign Minister had outlined Austria-Hungary's relations to Germany in the Triple Alliance as follows: "J'entend rester scrupuleusement fidèle aux obligations inscrites dans le traité Austro-Allemand, mais je ne cache pas mon intention de profiter avec un sain egoïsme de toute la liberté d'action laissée à chacun des contractants en dehors de ces obligations qui sont définies et par là même précises et limitées."
- (46) Coun Förgach reported from Belgrade that he had been personally told by the Special Correspondent of The Times that the press campaign against the Monarchy had been formented at the behest of the British Foreign Office. Grey replied that the Mr. Brown in question was speaking out of turn since, as the British government had no control over the press, it could scarcely be responsible for any campaign waged by it. Even the ever suspicious Aehrenthal gave Förgach's claim that Noel Buxton had distributed millions of pounds in Serbia to finance a campaign against the Monarchy scant credence.
- (47) O.U.A., I, d.695. Private letter from Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, November 30th 1908.
- (48) Br.D., V, d.485. Grey to Cartwright, December 14th 1908. Grey dismissed Aehrenthal's criticisms with the words: "Baron d'Aehrenthal's views as to England's responsibility for the present situation are on a par with the statements in part of the Austrian press, which writes as if it were England and not Austria which had first disturbed the status quo. Two days later Grey wrote to Cartwright, saying: "As far as the press was concerned, I considered that we were the injured party." cf. *ibid.*, 487 Grey to Cartwright, December 16th 1908.
- (49) O.U.A., I, d.695. Private letter from Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, December 5th 1908.
- (50) *ibid.* d,768. Private letter from Aehrenthal, marked 'Very Confidential' dated December 17th 1908.
- (51) Hardinge was of the view that if Aehrenthal remained obdurate and refused to consider even financial compensation

for Turkey then he was likely to have overplayed his hand and ran the very real risk of the Emperor dismissing him. Evidently Hardinge believed that there was more an element of bluff in Aehrenthal's diplomatic manoeuvrings.

- (52) O.U.A., I, d.781. Private letter from Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, December 20th 1908.
- (53) *ibid.* d.730. Private letter from Count Khevenhüller in Paris, December 12th 1908. cf. Wittrock, *op. cit.* p,218 et seq. Wittrock believes that Edward did in fact make such a remark in an unguarded moment but not to Riza but somebody else and then Riza got to hear about it. Wittrock also considers that Aehrenthal consistently overrated Edward's influence on British foreign policy. Edward's input here was scarcely comparable with that of Franz Joseph in Austria.
- (54) Br.D.,V,d.823. Private letter from Grey to Nicolson, April 2nd 1909.
- (55) *ibid.* d.475 Cartwright's memorandum was enclosed in a letter of Sir Francis Bertie of December 5th 1908.
- (56) On December 23rd Grey wrote a letter to Cartwright dismissing this accusation as absurd. The letter is quoted in his autobiography *Twenty-five Years.* (Vol.I.) Thus: 'I can only qualify as preposterous and utterly absurd the Austrian suspicion that H.M.'s Government are desirous of bringing about an European war. Both public opinion and the foreign policy of H.M's Government are alike opposed to such a scheme. So far from ever encouraged the Governments of Serbia, Montenegro and Turkey in an attitude of opposition to Austria, we might fairly claim that it is to some extent due to our influence that the Ottoman Government has shown itself ready to negotiate with Austria. We have used all our influence in the cause of peace by discouraging impossible claims and demands and by curbing the violence of public feeling, which was outraged by the policy of Baron d'Aehrenthal himself.'
- (57) Br.D.,V, d.483 and d.484. Telegram and letter from Cartwright to Grey, December 11th 1908.
- (58) *ibid.* d.484. Minute by King Edward VII on a dispatch from Cartwright to Grey, December 11th 1908.
- (59) *ibid.* d.485, Telegram, Grey to Cartwright, December 14th 1908.
- (60) *ibid.* d.487. Private letter from Grey to Cartwright, December 16th 1908.
- (61) O.U.A.,I,d.758. Dispatch from London, December 16th 1908.
- (62) Br.D.,V,d.481. Enclosure IV in Aide-Mémoire, December 25th 1908.
- (63) *ibid.* d.500. Private Letter from Hardinge to Nicolson, January 4th 1909. Also cf. d.528. Grey to Nicolson, January 23rd 1909.
- (64) O.U.A.,I, Telegram to London, January 9th 1909. The Aide-Mémoire handed to Grey by Mensdorff on January 11th was enclosed in the letter from Grey to Cartwright on January 16th 1909. cf. Br.D.,V,d.516.
- (65) *ibid.* In a speech to the House of Commons on January 22nd 1909 Grey was to say that news of an agreement between Austria-Hungary and Turkey was extremely welcome and he hoped that it would be a pointer to an agreement between

Austria-Hungary and Serbia. Thus: "I trust from the example of conciliation which both Austria and Turkey have shown will be helpful in the settlement of the remaining controversies."

- (66) This was a reference to a speech by the Serbian Prime Minister, Milovanović to the Serbian parliament, the Skupstschina, in which he declared that Austria-Hungary had done little for the Serbs of Bosnia except make slaves of them. This led to Aehrenthal making a demand for an immediate apology which he duly received. cf. Schmitt, op. cit., p.145 et seq.
- (67) Br.D.,V,d.503. Enclosure in Cartwright's dispatch of January 6th 1909.
- (68) ibid. Grey to Cartwright. d.501. January 6th 1908.
- (69) ibid. d.508, Cartwright to Grey, January 7th 1908.
- (70) ibid.
- (71) O.U.A.,I,d.881. Telegram to London, January 12th 1909. F. Stieve summarize Aehrenthal's complaints against Great Britain on page 57 et seq. of his Tragödie der Bundesgenossen.
- (72) ibid. d.892. Telegram from London, January 14th 1909.
- (73) Wittrock, op. cit., p.274, says that while Aehrenthal did not believe the stories about Buxton's millions he did believe that British agents were at work stirring up trouble.
- (74) O.U.A.,I,d.903. Telegram from London, January 18th 1909. On the 22nd of January Grey gave a speech to the House of Commons regarding the continual criticism of Great Britain in the Austrian press, saying: "No doubt this feeling for Turkey and the force of events placed us in an attitude not sympathetic to the Austrian action of last autumn. When pending questions in the Near East have been settled I trust that want of sympathy will pass away. That is our desire. But in Austria we have been unduly and publicly accused of a deliberate play of malevolence. I do not attach importance to these accusations. But I cannot allow the gross charges made against us to pass without saying that it would be under the mark to call the gross charges that have been made against us misrepresentations. They are sheer inventions, and the harm that they do is not so much in the resentment caused here as in the fact that until they are not only discontinued but disbelieved in the country of their origin, they create a state of feeling there, which is a barrier to cordial relations between the public opinion of the two countries- a barrier which it is not in our power but only in theirs to remove."
- (75) Br. D., V, d.570. Nicolson to Grey, February 14th 1909.
- (76) ibid.,d.571 and d.576. Telegram from Nicolson to Grey, February 15th and 17th 1909.
- (77) O.U.A.,I,d.963. Telegram to London, February 5th 1909.
- (78) Br.D.,V,d.555. Cartwright to Grey, February 3rd 1909.
- (79) ibid.,d.592. Grey to Cartwright, February 19th 1909, Quoted in G.P.Gooch, Before the War, Vol II Grey.
- (80) ibid.,d.583. Grey to Goschen, February 18th 1909, enclosed in a Memorandum dated February 11th 1909 by Sir Charles Hardinge reporting his conversation with the German Imperial Chancellor, Prince von Bülow the preceding day.

- (81) *ibid.*,d.604. Telegram from Grey to Cartwright, February 24th 1909. cf. also Grey, *Twenty-five Years*. I, pp.186-7.
- (82) *ibid.*,d.592. Cartwright to Grey, February 26th 1909 and *ibid.*,d.598. Goschen to Grey, February 23rd 1909.
- (83) *ibid.*,d.597. Whitehead to Grey, February 23rd 1909.
- (84) *ibid.*,d.603. Grey to Cartwright, February 24th 1909.
- (85) O.U.A.,I, 1048. Telegram from London, February 24th 1909.
- (86) *ibid.*,d.1053. Telegram to London, February 25th 1909.
- (87) Br.D.,V,d.624. Nicolson to Grey, February 28th 1909.
- (88) For these Franco-British negotiations, cf. Schnitt, *op. cit.* p.158 et seq.
- (89) O.U.A.,II,d.1072. Telegram from Aehrenthal to Mensdorff, February 27th 1909.
- (90) Br.D.,V,d.643. Grey to Cartwright. March 2nd 1909.
- (91) *ibid.*,II07. Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, March 4th 1909.
- (92) Br.D.,V,d.657. Cartwright to Grey, March 6th 1909.
- (93) *ibid.*,d.559. Grey to Cartwright, March 8th 1909.cf. also O.U.A.,II,II09. Aehrenthal to Forgach, March 5th 1909.
- (94) *ibid.*,d.647. Grey to Goschen, March 3rd 1909.cf.O.U.A., II, I087. Telegram from London, March 2nd 1909.
- (95) *ibid.*,d.634. Grey to Whitehead, March 1st 1909. Enclosed is the Serbian Declaration of February 27th 1909.
- (96) *ibid.*,d.653. Whitehead to Grey. March 4th 1909. Enclosed is a 'Proposed Circular to the Serbian representatives at the Capitals of the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of Berlin.' For Russian situation cf.*ibid.*, d.664. Nicolson to grey, March 10th 1909.
- (97) The French text of the Serbian Declaration is to be found in Br.D.,V,d.662. Gruic to Grey. March 11th 1909.
- (98) Br. D.,V,d.667. Cartwright to Grey, March 12th 1909.
- (99) *ibid.*,d.674. Grey to Cartwright, March 12th 1909. cf. O.U.A., II,d.II93. Telegram from London, March 12th 1909.
- (100) For the text of the Serbian Note cf.O.U.A., II, d.1220. telegram from London, March 19th 1909. cf. also Schnitt, *op. cit.* p.182.
- (101) Br.D.,V,d.683. Whitehead to Grey, March 19th 1909. Minutes on this dispatch.cf.also *ibid.*,d.690. Nicolson to Grey, March 15th 1909, where Izvolsky is quoted as saying that the Serbian Note contained certain expressions which could very well have been left out. Nicolson concluded his assessment of Serbia's demands as Russia saw them with the comment: "It is unfortunate that, as is I fear undoubtedly the case, Russia held out until recently hopes to Serbia that she would receive territorial compensation and that Russia would employ every diplomatic and pacific means to secure them for her. It would have been better, and perhaps juster to Serbia, if from the outset the true situation had been known and explained to her."
- (102) O.U.A. *ibid.*,1237. Telegram from London, March 17th 1909.
- (103) *ibid.*,d.1252, Note from British ambassador, March 17th 1909.
- (104) O.U.A., II,d.1278. Telegram to London, March 17th 1909.
- (105) *ibid.*
- (106) The English text is cited in Schnitt, p.210 et seq while the French text is given in O.U.A., II,d.1280. Note for the British ambassador in Vienna, March 19th 1909. The words contained in the final third paragraph were not meant to be

- (IO7) Br.D.,V,d.725. Grey to Cartwright, March 20th 1909 and also d.721, Cartwright to Grey, March 19th 1909.
- (IO8) O.U.A.,II,d.1302. Note from the British ambassador, March 21st 1909.
- (IO9) *ibid.* Aehrenthal was handed the Note by Cartwright on March 21st and an account of their subsequent conversation was given in a private letter from Aehrenthal to Cartwright on March 22nd 1909. O.U.A., II. d.1313. cf also Cartwright's long private letter to Grey on April 1st 1909. Br.D.,V,d.820. Aehrenthal was to maintain that the original proposal came from Cartwright. cf.also O.U.A., II,d.1411. Telegram from London, March 29th 1909.
- (110) *ibid.*,d.1313, Enclosure I.
- (111) *ibid.*
- (112) *ibid.*,d.1315. Telegram from London, March 22nd 1909.
- (113) *ibid.*,d.1314. Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, March 22nd 1909.
- (114) *ibid.*,d.1325. Telegram from London, March 23rd 1909.
- (115) *ibid.*,d.1341. Telegram from London, March 24th 1909.
- (116) Br. D.,V,d.739. Grey to Cartwright, March 22nd 1909. An English translation can be found in Schnitt, op. cit, p.214.
- (117) *ibid.*,d.747. Cartwright to Grey, March 23rd 1909.
- (118) *ibid.*
- (119) Grey's determination to maintain certain phrases in his draft after Russia had agreed to accept Aehrenthal's was because he did not wish to add substance to the view that Germany had gained a complete diplomatic victory for her Austro-Hungarian ally.
- (120) Br.,D.,V,d.758. Grey to Cartwright, March 24th 1909.
- (121) *ibid.*
- (122) O.U.A.,II,d.1364. Telegram to London, March 26th 1909 and cf. also Br.,D.,V,d.773.Cartwright to Grey, March 26th 1909.
- (123) For the English text see Schnitt,op.cit.,p.217.
- (124) Br.D.,V,d.770.Grey to Goschen, March 25th 1909, and also d.774. Grey to Cartwright, March 26th 1909. Grey's long conversation with the German ambassador, Count Metternich, ended with Grey decisively rejecting Germany's claim that Britain was effectively blocking a peaceful solution to the crisis. In his telegram to Cartwright he said:" Count Metternich continued to maintain that we were obstructing peace by refusing recognition. I, on the other hand, maintained that by giving unconditional recognition we should not be securing peace but might simply be preparing the way for a settlement of the Serbian and Montenegrin difficulties by force, to which method we should then indirectly be parties, whereas, if Austria promised peace we should be quite ready to become partners in a general peaceful settlement by doing what Austria desired." The *conditio sine qua non* of Britain's assent was Austria's assurance of "a peaceful and not a forcible solution of present difficulties."
- (125) *ibid.*,d.802. Cartwright to Grey, March 20th 1909.
- (126) O.U.A.,II,d.1379.Telegram to London, March 27th 1909.
- (127) Br.D.,V,d.771.Grey to the British ambassadors in Paris. Rome and St.Petersburg, March 26th 1909. Grey's proposals were immediately accepted by the Italian and French governments.

- (128) *ibid.*
- (129) Br.,V,d.781. Grey to Cartwright. March 27th 1909.
- (130) O.U.A.,II,d.1398. Aide-memoire from the British ambassador, March 28th 1909. cf. also Br.D.,V,d.786. Grey to Cartwright, March 27th 1909.
- (131) Br.D.,V,d.794. Cartwright to Grey, March 28th 1909. Grey was thanked personally for his attempts to defuse the situation and preserve peace.
- (132) The negotiations leading to the alteration of Article XXIX bear only in a minor way upon the relations between the Monarchy and Great Britain and so have not been discussed here. Briefly, however, one may say that abrogation of clauses 5 and 7-11 was agreed after long discussions, mainly between Austria-Hungary and Italy while clause 6, forbidding the establishment of a naval base at Antivari retained.
- (133) O.U.A.,II,d.1394. Telegram to London, March 28th 1909. Hardinge made similar comments to Mensdorff.cf.d. 1397. Telegram from London, March 28th 1909.
- (134) *ibid.*,II,d.1434. Telegram to London, April 1st 1909.
- (135) British statesmen had in fact considerable doubts about the desirability of summoning a conference to discuss and settle sensitive issues. Both Grey and Hardinge were prepared, however, to consider any means to achieve a peaceful solution of the conflict and fastened upon the idea of a conference only when other proposals seemed to be leading nowhere.cf. Cambridge History of British Foreign
- (135) Policy, Vol.III.p.405 and also Schnitt,op.cit.Chapter VII, 'The Abandonment of the Conference.'
- (136) cf. Conrad von Hötzendorff, Aus meiner Dienstzeit, Vol.I, p,162, who remarks that on March 29th 1909 the Council of Ministers, presided over by Aehrenthal, actually decided to mobilize the army. As far as Conrad was concerned this was clear evidence that Aehrenthal believed that war was a very real possibility. However Conrad's view should be regarded with a degree of circumspection. It is more likely that Conrad von Hötzendorff was putting his own particular gloss upon events. As leader of the war-party he was forever seeking confirmation for his views.
- (137) P.A. VIII/147, Mensdorff to Berchtold, private, February 20th 1912.
- (138) Conrad gave a synopsis of his views vis-à-vis Serbia in his memoirs. vide Aus meiner Dienstzeit,I,p.78.
- (139) O.U.A,II. 2157, London May 7th 1910.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V
THE BALKAN WARS

- (1) Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik, 1908-1914, II, 2157
- (2) *ibid.* Tarnowski to Foreign Ministry, May 7th 1909.
- (3) *ibid.*
- (4) British Documents on the origins of the War, VI, 178.
Cartwright to Grey, April 29th with Minute by Crowe and Grey,
May 8th 1909.
- (5) *ibid.*
- (6) O.U.A., II, 2167, Tarnowski to Foreign Ministry, May 7th 1909.
- (7) *ibid.*
- (8) Br.D., 1X/1, 19. Cartwright to Hardinge, private letter,
July 9th 1909.
- (9) O.U.A.(1908-1914), II, 1677. Report to the Emperor, July
16th 1909.
- (10) *ibid.*
- (11) *ibid.*, 1685 and 1694. Telegrams from London, July 22nd and
27th 1909.
- (12) Br.D., 1X/1, 48. Cartwright to Grey, September 4th 1909.
- (13) *ibid.*, 38. Cartwright to Grey, August 9th 1909. The Austro-
Hungarian ambassador in Washington, Baron von Hegenmüller, who
had been involved in the dispute between Károlyi and Gladstone also
said the same thing.
- (14) Grey to Cartwright, *ibid.*, 56. September 24th 1909.
- (15) Br. D., 1X/1, Cartwright to Grey, August 9th 1909, *Supra*,
note 8.
- (16) When visitors during the crisis warned Aehrenthal not to
underate Britain, he repeatedly asked them: "What can England
do to us?" *op.cit.* Steed, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, p.233.
- (17) *ibid.*, 1X/1, 212. Grey to Cartwright, February 3rd 1909 and
cf. also O.U.A., 11, 2419. Tarnowski to Foreign Ministry,
January 20th 1909.
- (18) *ibid.* Telegram to London, February 4th 1909.
- (19) Br. D., 1X/1, Cartwright to Hardinge, private letter, June
24th 1909, with a Minute by Sir Edward Grey.
- (20) *ibid.* Hardinge to Grey and Cartwright, private letter,
October 4th 1909.
- (21) *ibid.*
- (22) Br. D., 1X/1, 127. Grey to cartwright, March 2nd 1910 and
cf. O.U.A., II, 1981. Telegram to London, February 4th 1910.
Also Grey to Cartwright, March 8th 1910 and 135 and 136
Cartwright to Grey, March 10th and 11th 1910.
- (23) *ibid.*, 146. Grey to Cartwright, March 29th 1909 and 147,
Cartwright to Grey, March 11th 1909. Also *ibid.*, 136. Cartwright
to Grey, March 31st.
- (24) *ibid.*
- (25) O.U.A., 11, 1914. Telegram to London, December 20th 1909.
- (26) *ibid.*, 2008. Private letter to London, February 18th 1910.
- (27) Br, D., 1X/1, 165. Cartwright to Grey. August 5th 1910.
- (28) A.D., 111, 2260. Aide-mémoire from the British ambassador,
September 28th 1910.
- (29) *ibid.*
- (30) *ibid.*, 2289. Private letter from Aehrenthal to Mensdorff,
October 10th 1910.
- (31) *ibid.*, 11, 2024. Memorandum of Aehrenthal's conversations
with the German Emperor and German Chancellor in Berlin,
February 22nd and 23rd 1910.
- (32) *op. cit.* Baron de Siebert, *Entente Diplomacy and the World*.

London, 1924. pp. 583-4.

(33) Aehrenthal said that he was at a loss to understand Germany's Moroccan policy, which was just 'Krupp and Mannesman.' (F.Fellner (ed.), *Das politische Tagebuch Joseph Redlichs*, July 29th 1911) He added that the Monarchy could 'pursue no Weltpolitik' which was the obvious source of tension between Germany and Great Britain. *ibid.* August 7th 1911. Aehrenthal, in fact, made a point of telling Cartwright that he understood that Britain was treaty bound to support France. A.D. III, 2541. Instructions to London, June 11th 1911. Consequently pan-German criticism of Aehrenthal that 'he remained as dumb as a fish' during the Moroccan crisis was somewhat unfair.

(34) Br. D., I, 359. Lansdowne to Lord Currie, February 3rd 1902.

(35) *op. cit.* Conrad, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, VOL. 2, p.282.

Vienna 1921. Conrad recalls that the Emperor was extremely angry with him and had exclaimed: "These incessant attacks on Aehrenthal, I forbid them..The ever-recurring reproaches regarding Italy and the Balkans are directed against Me! My policy is a policy of peace.." *ibid.* cf. Giesel, *Zwei Jahrzehnte in nahen Orient*, p.190, where he writes: "The Archduke (Franz Ferdinand) once said to me, "Aehrenthal collaborates with Jews and Freemasons to prevent the Monarchy from holding a day of reckoning with Italy before it is too late.

(36) Giovanni Giolitti, *Memoirs of My Life*. Trans. by E.Storer. London 1923. p.266.

(37) *op. cit.* Entente Diplomacy and the World, Siebart, p.164.

(38) Russia's simultaneous attempt through her ambassador at Constantinople, Nicholas Charykov- the so-called 'Charykov Kite'- to persuade the Turks to open the Straits to Russian warships in return for compelling the Balkan states to act less aggressively met with no success.

(39) Br. D., IX/I, 3214, 3225, 3275, 3300. Telegrams from London, January 12th and 15th, February 6th and 16th 1912.

(40) *ibid.*, IV, 3315. Telegram from London, February 26th 1912.

(41) *ibid.*, 3507. Aide-Mémoire for British Embassy, May 4th 1912.

(42) Giolitti, *Memoirs*, *op. cit.* pp. 283, 296.

(43) Br. D., IX/I, 528. Cartwright to Grey, December 5th 1911.

(44) *ibid.* Minute by Grey.

(45) A. Nekludov, *Diplomatic Reminiscences before and during the World War, 1911-17*. Translated from the French by Alexander Paget. London 1920. p.52. The French Foreign Minister (later President) Poincaré's remark that although the treaty was communicated to Russia it was 'undoubtedly' not inspired by her, was in Alan Clark's memorable phrase 'economical with the actualité.'

(46) *ibid.* p.55.

(47) That Grey and the British government knew what was going on and took great care that Vienna did not know, is incontrovertible. Nicolson to Cartwright, private letter, March 18th 1912. For the reaction of both the British and Austro-Hungarian governments to the treaty of March 14th 1912 between Serbia and Bulgaria, cf. Schröder, *op. cit.*, p. 90 et seq.

(48) O.U.A., IV, 3633

(49) Br. D., IX/I, 622. Cartwright to Grey, August 15th 1912 and Editorial Note. 623. Note communicated by French Chargé d'Affaires August 15th 1912. Also Cartwright to Grey, September 4th 1912 with Minutes by Grey and Mallet.

(50) Br.D., 1X/1, 713. Grey to Cartwright, September 10th 1912.

(51) *ibid.*, Editorial Note.

(52) *ibid.* 715. Cartwright to Grey, September 11th 1912 with Minute by Grey.

(53) Alfred Kiderlen-Wächter, Berchtold's informant in Berlin was hopelessly wrong when he maintained that any alliance between Serbia and Bulgaria, were it to exist, concluded under Russian aegis would strengthen the status quo not undermine it. Perhaps more remarkably, Aehrenthal, for all his diplomatic adroitness, believed such a prospect 'a chimera' and never made any attempt to forestall it. In this respect the 'sphinx-like' attitude that Aehrenthal adopted vis-à-vis Bulgaria and Serbia- one of 'mysterious detachment'- merely played into Russia's hands.

(54) Br.D., 1X/1, 1973. Circular Telegram to Austro-Hungarian Embassies in Europe, October 6th 1912, with enclosure. *Op.cit.* Gooch, 11, p.386. In the article which he contributed to Steinitz, *op.cit.*, p.68 et seq., Count Hoyos says that the Ballhausplatz never seriously considered dividing the Balkans with Bulgaria to either weaken Serbia or Russia.

(55) *op.cit.* Bogitshevich, Causes of the War. An examination into the causes of the European War, with special reference to Russia and Serbia, p.49. London 1919.

(56) Br.D., 1X/11, 4215. Telegram from London, October 31 1912.

(57) *ibid.*

(58) G.Pol., XXXII, 12399. Prince von Lichnowsky to the Foreign Ministry in Berlin, London, November 19th 1912.

(59) cf. Giesche, *op.cit.*, p.37 et seq.

(60) Br.D., 1X/11, 83. Cartwright to Grey, November 1st 1912.

(61) *ibid.*, 134. Grey to Cartwright, November 5th 1912. cf. Gooch *op.cit.* p.389 and also O.U.A., 1V, 4269. Telegram from London, November 4th 1912.

(62) Sazonov, S.D., *Fateful Years, 1909-1916*, p.73. According to Sazonov, Hartwig, the Russian Minister in Belgrade, reported the demands of the Balkan States as follows: (1) Montenegro to acquire Scutari; (2) Serbia, northern Albania and the coast from San Giovanni di Medua to Skumbra, while (3) Greece to annex southern Albania.

(63) O.U.A., 1V, 4321, telegram from London, November 8th 1912

(64) *ibid.*, 4333. Telegram from London, November 8th 1912.

(65) *ibid.*, 4389. Telegram to London, November 9th 1912.

(66) *ibid.*, 4369. Telegram to London, November 10th 1912.

(67) *ibid.*, 4370. Telegram from London, November 11th 1912.

(68) *ibid.*, 4404. telegram from London, November 13th 1912.

(69) Br.D., 1X/11, 165. Cartwright to Nicolson, private letter, November 8th 1912.

(70) *ibid.*, Cartwright to Grey, November 21st 1912.

(71) O.U.A., 1V. *ibid.* 4404. Telegram from London, November 13th.

(72) *ibid.*, 4565. Despatch from London, November 22nd 1912. cf. also Br.D., 1X/11, 238.

(73) *ibid.*, 4542. Despatch from London, November 21st 1912. 73a cf. Gooch. *op. cit.*, 11, p.312 et seq.

(74) Throughout November Austro-Hungarian forces were continually being deployed in Galicia on the Russian frontier and on December 12th, Conrad von Hötzendorff, whose bellicose views were well known, resumed his post as Chief of the General Staff.

(75) Prince Lichnowsky: My London Mission, 1912-14, p.113. Interestingly, Lichnowsky claimed that Grey seemed extremely favourable to the wishes of both Austria and Italy. The Russian ambassador, Benckendorff, however, disputes this, saying: "While Germany and England have met on the basis of compromise, English diplomacy has gone to the last limit of firmness to make the compromise turn in favour of Russia and the Balkan states, while the German attitude, though in favour of Austria, has been much less decisive." *Un Livre Noir. Diplomatie d'avant-guerre d'après les Documents des Archives Russes*, November 1910-July 1912. Librairie de Travail, 11, p.304. February 25th 1913, Paris.

(76) Once again Franz Joseph came down on the side of Berchtold in favour of peace.

(77) Berchtold always maintained that Austria-Hungary never had designs on Serbia either politically or economically. Thus he later wrote: "From the time of the London Conference nothing weighed more heavily on us in those days than the thought that the complete change that had taken place in the Balkans against our wishes might involve us in a war. An impartial observer will not doubt that at a time when a fundamental re-arrangement of the political configuration was in progress on our frontiers, our empire, even though completely 'satiated' in a territorial sense had definite-indeed vital-interests at stake. Nor would he doubt that our policy was determined not by hostility to a neighbour but solely out of regard for our own security." *op.cit.*, E. Steinitz, *Erinnerungen an Franz Joseph I* with an essay by Count Berchtold.

(78) *op.cit.* Bogitshevich, p.98.

(79) *ibid.*

(80) Letter to Sazonov, December 10th 1912, *op.cit.*, Siebert, p. 426. Hartwig was equally candid some four months later, writing: Serbia has only passed the first stage of her historical journey (the war against Turkey), and for the gain of her aims she must still undergo a fearful struggle in which her whole existence may be at stake. Serbia's promised land lies in the territory of the present Austria, and not where her aims are now directed." *op.cit.*, 'Is Germany Guilty?' 11, p.24. Pasić, the Serbian Premier was even more sanguine, saying at the end of the Second Balkan War that had it not been for the desire to acquire Macedonia without making too many concessions to Bulgaria "I might have caused a general European war to break out for the sake of acquiring Bosnia and Herzegovina already at the time of the First Balkan War." *op.cit.*, Bogitshevich, p.35.

(81) Br.D. 1X/11, 391. Grey to Cartwright, December 17th 1912.

(82) O.U.A., V, 4954. Telegram from London, December 18th 1912.

(83) H. Hantsch, Berchtold, Vol.I, p.388.

(84) Br.D., 1X/11, 538. Nicolson to Cartwright, private letter, January 21st 1913.

(85) O.U.A., V, 5533. Telegram from London, January 25th 1913.

(86) *ibid.*, 5604. Despatch from Berlin, January 30th 1913.

(87) Br.D., 1X/11, Communication from Count Mensdorff, April 23rd 1913.

(88) *ibid.*, 885. Grey to Cartwright, April 24th 1913.

(89) *ibid.*

(90) *ibid.*, 877. Communication from Count Mensdorff, April 23rd 1913.

(91) Conrad, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, Vol.2., p.67. (may 5th 1913)

Also Conrad von Hözendorff to Franz Ferdinand, O.U.A., VI, 6870.

(92) O.U.A., VI, 7548. Telegram from London, June 29th 1913.

(93) *ibid.*, 7689. telegram from London, July 8th 1913.

(94) *ibid.*, 7830. telegram to London, July 18th 1913.

(95) Mensdorff Manuscripts., Karton 9, Berchtold to Mensdorff June 18th 1913.

(96) *Livre Noir* II, p.24. January 30th 1913.

(97) Mensdorff MSS, Karton 4, Tagebuch, July 6th 1913.

(98) Br.D., 1X/11, 1190, 1191, Grey to Cartwright, July 31st and August 1st 1913.

(99) O.U.A., VI, 7807, 7895, Telegrams from London, July 17th and 21st 1913.

(100) Br.D., 1X/11. 1207, Grey to Cartwright, August 6th 1913.

(101) *Vide Note* 81.

(102) *cf.* Helmreich, *op.cit.*, p.419.

(103) Br.D., X/1, 17. Cartwright to Grey, September 24th 1913.

(104) *ibid.*, Crowe to Cartwright, 39, October 15th 1913,

(105) *ibid.*, 38, Goschen to Grey, October 16th 1913 with Minute by Grey. *cf.* also Grey to Goschen, October 18th 1913, 45.

(106) O.U.A., VIII. Circular telegram to the Austro-Hungarian Embassies and Legations in Europe, October 17th 1913.

(107) Br.D., X/1, 49. Grey to Goschen, October 20th 1913.

(108) For a synopsis of the Commission's work *vide* G.Pol., XXXVI/1, p.129. *passim*.

(109) Br.D., X/1, 58. Grey to Bertie, October 29th 1913.

(110) *ibid.*

(111) *ibid.*, 59. Nicolson to Hardinge, October 29th 1913.

(112) *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914*, XXXVI/1, 14020, and Notes.

(113) Br.D., X/1, 102. Grey to Bunsen, december 27th 1913, with Editorial Note.

(114) Crowe's Minute on Bunsen's Dispatch to Grey of December 24th 1913.

(115) *ibid.*

(116) *ibid.*

(117) *ibid.*, 104. Memorandum for circulation to the cabinet, January 6th 1914.

(118) *cf.* Helmreich, *op.cit.*, p.433.

(119) O.U.A., VII, 9151. Despatch from London, January 2nd 1914.

(120) Br.D., X/1, 211.

(121) *ibid.*, 123. Grey to Mensdorff, March 7th 1914.

(122) *ibid.*, 124. Grey to Bunsen, March 8th 1914.

(123) *op.cit.*, Bogitshevitch, p.53. Note I.

(124) *ibid.* p.98.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

PART I a

THE JULY CRISIS

- (1) OP.cit A. May, The Passing of The Hapsburg Monarchy, Vol.1 p.57.
- (2) FO 371/1899, de Bunsen to Grey d.32. February 13th, 1914 and minutes.
- (3) op.cit. Brigitte Zwerger, The diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Roumania, 1913-14, London M.A. thesis, 1971, p. 25.
- (4) ibid. p.28.
- (5) ibid. p.22.
- (6) ibid.
- (7) OUA, viii, 9918.
- (8) Militärische Rundschau, June 1914.
- (9) OUA, vii, 9579.
- (10) OUA, viii, 9984.
- (11) op.cit. H.Hantsch, Berchtold ii, pp.608, 625, 664.
- (12) Franz Joseph to Wilhelm II, July 2nd, OUA, viii, pp. 250-61.
- (13) Berchtold-Tschirsky discussion, July 3rd 1914, OUA, viii, pp.277-8.
- (14) Tschirsky to Bethmann Hollweg, June 30th 1914, in Imanuel GEiss, ed., Juli 1914, in Die europäische Krise und der Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkrieges, Munich, 1965, pp.39-40.
- (15) op.cit. Fritz Fellner, Mission Hoyos, p.296.
- (16) Protokoll des Gemeinsamen Ministerrates der Österreich-ungarischen Monarchie, Protocol of July 7th, recorded by Hoyos in Miklos Konjathy ed. Budapest 1966, pp.141-50. Conrad von Hötzenendorff had argued that the murders in Sarajevo were Serbia's declaration of war on Austria-Hungary and the only possible response to it was war." ibid,
- (17) ibid. p.148.
- (19a) A.F. Priam, Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, p.5 Serious questions can, indeed, be asked of Grey during this period. For example, on August 1st, Lichnowsky passed on to Berlin an offer that Grey had made to him guaranteeing French neutrality if the Germans did not attack France, implicitly giving Germany in a 'free-hand' in the East.(Lichnowsky to Jagow, August 1st in Geiss ed., July 1914, no. 170, p.341. The Kaiser was, naturally, very enthusiastic about this and at 7.02 p.m. the same day dispatched a telegram to George V assuring him that Germany would not attack France if France remained neutral in the war with Russia and if France's neutrality were 'guaranteed by the British fleet and army." (Nicolson, George V, His Life and Reign, London 1952, p. 247.) Grey was subsequently summoned to the palace that same evening to help frame a reply to the Kaiser's telegram and, interestingly, Grey's draft in pencil on a scrap of paper! had George declaring "there must be some 'misunderstanding' of a suggestion that passed in friendly conversation between Prince Lichnowsky and Sir Edward Grey."(sic)(Origins of the War, Vol.3, pp 174-9, 381; Nicolson, George V, p.247) This 'misunderstanding' (if that is what it was) at this extremely critical point in the crisis, is nothing short of astounding. Secondly, after a cabinet meeting on the evening of August 3rd Grey had decided to send a message to the German government, via the British ambassador, Goschen, asking it to withdraw its demand to pass troops through Belgium but why was such a telegram, couched in merely moderate terms not dispatched from the Foreign Office until 9.30 a.m. the following morning? J. Paul Harris comments:"Grey's tardiness in

this respect has never been adequately explained." (Albertini, *Origins of the War*, Vol.3, pp. 490-1. op.cit. J. Paul Harris, in *The Origins of World War 1*, p.289. Is this because needed to ensure that the Germans had entered Belgium in force and thereby irrevocably 'compromised' themselves since there were acute divisions in the Cabinet and Samuel, a key member, for one, had threatened to resign since he regarded a limited violation of Belgium's territory and neutrality as an ineffective and unjustifiable *casus belli*. The mere passage of German troops through the Ardennes, for example, would not warrant Britain's intervention. Samuel wanted "the onus of provoking any British intervention squarely on Germany" which only a full-scale invasion of Belgium by Germany would do. Keith Wilson, *The Policy of the Entente: Essays on the Determinants of British Foreign Policy, 1904-14*. Cambridge University Press, 1985.

(20) PA I/811, Interna lxx/2 memorandum by B. Molden, July 6th 1914.

(21) *ibid*.

(22) vide F.R. Bridge, *The British Declaration of War on Austria-Hungary in 1914*, *Slavonic Review*, pp. 401-422.

(23) op.cit. S. Williamson, *Austria-Hungary*, pp 191-192, Manfred Rauchensteiners, *Der Tod des Doppeladlers: Österreich-Ungarn und der Erste Weltkrieg*, Vienna, 1993, pp. 67-70. (der Tod des Doppeladlers.); Hantsch, Berchtold, pp.557-8.

(24) op.cit. Rauschensteiner, *Der Tod des Doppeladlers*, p.68.

(25) op.cit. F. Bridge, *From Sadowa to Sarajevo, The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1866-1914*, London 1972, p.374.

(26) op.cit. Gordon A. Turnstall Jr. *Austria-Hungary in the Origins of World War 1*, p.140. On crucial aspect of the Austrian decision making process deserves special mention in the fact that although the Emperor Franz Joseph had 'the last word' vis-a-vis all these fundamental decisions he was not actually present in person at any of the discussions of the Council of Ministers where these policies were being formulated.

(27) F.R. Bridge, *The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary*, p.376.

(28) FO 371/2159, Grey to Beartie, t.508, July 28th 1914.

(29) *ibid*.

(30) Grey to Bunsen, d. 128, July 29th 1914

(31) Leslie, *Antecedents*, p.381 The text gives the date of this statement as July 28th. Footnote refers to diary entry of July 21st.

(32) FO 371/2158, Buchanan to Grey f. 166. July 24th 1914 and minutes.

(33) Cab. 413/35/20 Asquith to George V, July 25th 1914.

(34) FO 371/2159, Grey to de Bunsen, d. 124, July 27th 1914.

(35) *ibid*. Goschen to Grey t. 99, July 28th 1914, minute.

(36) Cd. 7596 (de Bunsen to Grey, September 1st 1914).

(37) FO 371/2158, Buchanan to Grey, t. 109, July 25th 1914.

(38) Wasserstein, Samuel, pp. 161-3; Roy Jenkins, Asquith, London 1964, p. 328; Wilson, *Britain*, p.199. For a fuller discussion of the British belief in the possibility of a German march through the Ardennes, leaving the rest of Belgium alone, vide Brock, *Britain enters*, in Evans and Strandmann, eds. *Coming of the First World War*, pp.149-54.

(39) PA VIII/181, Mensdorff to Berchtold, d.39, August 10th 1914 M.MSS K Tagebuch, August 9th 1914.

(40) *ibid*.

(41) FO 371/2162, Bertie to Grey t. 150R, August 5th, minute.

(42) FO 371/2164, Bertie to Grey t. 203K, August 11th 1914 and

minutes.

(43) F.R. Bridge, The British Declaration of War on Austria-Hungary in 1914, Slavonic Review, Vol. 47, 1969, pp. 401-22.

(44) *ibid.* Grey to Rodd, t. 274, August 12th 1914.

(45) M. MSS K i George V to Mensdorff, August 12th 1914.

(46) *ibid.* Tagebuch, August 21st 1914.

(47) *ibid.* August 14th 1914.

PART 11

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

GREAT BRITAIN AND AUSTRIA-HUNGARY
ATTITUDES AT THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

- (1) B.D., XI, No.19, June 30th and No. 33, July 6th 1914.
De Bunsen was to outline the tenor of British policy at this time by informing the Ballhausplatz that Britain fully sympathized with "Austria's legitimate grievances with Serbia" but "whereas Austria seemed to be making these a starting point of her policy, H.M's Government were bound to look at the question primarily from the point of view of the maintenance of peace of Europe. In this way the two countries might easily drift apart." F.O. 371/1900, No. 48877 (final report of Sept. 1st)
- (1a) B.D., XI, No. 91, Grey to de Bunsen, July 24th.
(1b) Manchester Guardian, July 23rd.
- (2) Interestingly, Professor Joseph Redlich wrote two letters to the Economist on August 1st and 8th defending Austria's action and hoping that Britain would not intervene even if general, Europe-wide conflagration were to ensue.
- (3) For a description of this group vide the autobiography of Norman Angell, *After All*, London 1951, p.139.
- (4) The Pall Mall Gazette, July 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st 1914.
(5) The Morning Post, August 1st 1914.
(6) The Manchester Guardian, August 5th 1914.
(7) *ibid.*, August 1st 1914.
(8) *ibid.*, July 30th 1914
(9) *ibid.*, August 1st 1914.
(10) *ibid.*, July 30th 1914.
(11) The Nation, August 1st 1914.
(12) *ibid.*, August 6th 1914.
(13) The Yorkshire Post, July 28th 1914.
(14) A British Neutrality Committee was formed by J.A. Hobson and Graham Wallas. Vide Manchester Guardian, August 3rd 1914.
(15) Hansard, House of Commons, 5th series, vol LXV, August 3rd 1914, cols. 1810-27; H.C. Debates. 5. S., cols 1829-1878, August 3rd 1914.
(16) Daily News, July 31st. In this context, of course, by 'Triple Alliance', the author meant France, Russia and Britain - not Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.
(17) The Nation, August 29th.
(18) The Labour Leader, August 6th 1914.
(19) The Manchester Guardian, July 30th 1914. (20) *ibid.*
(21) The Times, August 1st 1914. (22) *ibid.*
(23) Seton-Watson: *The Archduke Franz Ferdinand*, Contemporary Review, August 1914, pp. 165-174., Murray Beaven, Austrian Policy, Oxford 1914, p.7. This pamphlet was a general review of Austria's policy since the Ausgleich with Hungary in 1867.
(24) Vide subsequent chapter on Steed and Seton-Watson.
(25) "It is upon such solemn contracts as these that civilisation rests. If we give them up or permit them to be violated, what becomes of civilization?" Sir Edward Grey, Foreign Secretary to the U.S. ambassador, op. cit. B. J. Hendrick's *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page*, London 1922-25, Vol. I, p.314. Vide also the letter of Grey to Sir Francis Blake, op.cit. G.M. Trevelyan's *Grey of Fallodon*, London 1937, p.271.
(26) The Times, August 29th 1914.
(27) Count Andrassy, *Diplomacy and War*, Vienna 1925, p.72.
(28) August 29th 1914. (29) Rupert Brooke, *The Collected Poems*, with a memoir by Edward Marsh, London 1949, pp. cxxxi-cxxxii.
(30) *War and Peace*, Dec. 1914; also *The Great Settlement*, lon.1915.
(31) The Manchester Guardian, October 21st 1914.
(32) The Morning Post, August 17th 1914.
(33) *ibid.* September 9th 1914.

- (34) The Morning Post, September 26th 1914.
- (35) The Times, December 2nd and January 20th 1914.
- (36) Contemporary Review, August 1914, pp. 215-22.
- (37) The Murder of the Archduke, Fortnightly Review, August 1914, pp. 224-41.
- (38) The Ultimate Disappearance of Austria-Hungary, Nineteenth Century, November 1914, pp. 1003-31.
- (39) *ibid.*
- (40) *ibid.*
- (41) A new map of Europe, English Review, September 1914, p. 488. Vide also the editorial in the Edinburgh Review, October 1914, p.452.
- (42) *ibid.*
- (43) Austria and The Sons of Zeruah, Fortnightly Review, October 1914, pp.588-98.
- (44) Margot Asquith, Autobiography, London 1936, Vol II, p.122. (First published 1922)
- (45) Through Thirty Years, Vol II, pp.8-9, and History of The Times, Vol IV, pp462-3.
- (46) Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle, London 1920, p.281.
- (47) Letter to Manchester Guardian, June 20th 1917.
- (48) Letter to Manchester Guardian, December 22nd 1916.
- (49) R. Wuliger, The Idea of Economic Imperialism with Special Reference to the Life and Work of E.D. Morel, Ph. D. thesis, London 1955, p. 328.
- (50) Common Sense, June 16th 1917. Later the UDC was to add: "What is the value of ideals when preached in a graveyard?" 'After four years', UDC, August 1918.
- (51) Norman Angell, War Aims, the Need for a Parliament of the Allies, London 1917, p.16.
- (52) The Times, February 23rd 1915.
- (53) The Times, August 20th 1914.
- (54) The Times, October 13th 1914.
- (55) The Times, March 25th 1915.
- (56) The Times, October 13th 1914.
- (57) 68. H.C.Deb. 5. S. Cols. 199-200.
- (58) Daily Express, September 17th 1914.
- (59) *ibid.*
- (60) L.B. Namier, Germany and Eastern Europe, London 1915, p.119.
- (61) Letters of Queen Victoria, i, p.124.
- (62) Lord Acton, 'Nationality' in J.N. Figgis and R.V. Laurence (Ed.), The History of Freedom and other Essays, London 1907, p.297.
- (63) Jules Desrree, Belgium and the Principle of Nationality, London 1915, p.35. Vide also C.R. Buxton, 'Nationality' in C.R. Buxton (Ed.), Towards a Lasting Settlement, London 1915, p.40, and W.E.H. Lecky, History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe, London 1919, Vol II, pp.218-21. Two other significant works on this theme were A.E. Zimmern, Nationality and Government, London 1918, pp.50-1, and C.E. Fayle, The Great Settlement, London 1915, p.64.
- (64) J.S. Mill: Considerations on Representative Government, Everyman edition, London 1920, pp. 360-1. (originally published 1861).
- (65) International Review, November 1919, p.261.
- (66) *ibid.* p.262.
- (67) A.J. Toynbee, The New Europe, London 1915, pp.14-17.
- (68) 'Nationalism and Liberty', Round Table, December 1914, pp.18-70.

- (69) C.R. Buxton, 'Nationality', C.R. Buxton (Ed.), Towards a Lasting Settlement, London 1915, pp.46-9.
- (70) Challenge, November 1st 1918.
- (71) Patriotism, London 1915, pp. 11-12.
- (72) The Morality of Nations, London 1915, p.22. This closely echoed J.S. Mill, who had earlier written in his Considerations on Representative Government: "For the preceding reasons, it is in general a necessary condition of free institutions that the boundaries of governments should coincide with those of nationalities.", Utilitarianism, Liberty and Representative Government, p.362.
- (73) The Times, August 30th 1914.
- (74) A.E. Zimmern, Nationality and Government, London 1918, pp.70-71.
- (75) Sean O'Casey, Selected Writings, Dublin 1923, p.64.
- (76) J.H. Rose, 'The National Idea', Contemporary Review, March 1919, p. 333
- (77) The War and Democracy, London 1914, p.8. Vide also New Statesman, September 18th 1916.
- (78) L.T. Hobhouse. The World in Conflict, London 1915, pp.82-3.
- (79) James Bryce, Essays and Addresses, London 1918, p.157.
- (80) June 23rd 1917.
- (81) J.H. Rose, Nationality as a Factor in Modern History, London 1916, p.208. Vide The Times, December 19th 1917 and the New Statesman, September 16th 1916.
- (82) Lord Acton, 'Nationality', J.N. Figgis and R.V. Laurence (Ed.), The History of Freedom and Other Essays, London 1907, p.300.
- (83) G.M. Trevelyan, An Autobiography and Other Essays, London 1949, pp.17-18.
- (84) *ibid.* p.290.
- (85) *ibid.*
- (86) *ibid.* p.298.
- (87) *ibid.* pp.299-300.
- (88) The International Anarchy, London 1916. According to Lowes Dickinson Machiavelli's The Prince epitomized this 'subversion' and 'degeneration.' Thus: "It is symbolical of all that was to follow that at that point (the end of the 15th century) stands looking down on the vista of centuries, the brilliant and sinister figure of Machiavelli" *ibid.* pp.9-10.
- (89) Norman Angell, 'The Ideas which are the Foundations', in International Affairs, published by the National Adult School Union, London 1924, p.15.
- (90) J.A. Hobson, 'Self-determination', UDC, April 1918.
- (91) H.N. Brailsford, After the Peace, London 1920, pp.54-5.
- (93) *ibid.*, pp.22-23. Apoint that Brailsford was to emphasize again in his League of Nations. London 1917, p.101.
- (92) War and Peace, April 1917. Brailsford was to lament not only the break-up of the Habsburg Empire but the Russian too: "The high complex organism has broken up into its elementary cells." After the Peace, p.60. Far from representing progress as nationalists fondly believed this disintegration was symptomatic of "decay, retrogression and decline". *ibid.*
- (94) The Empire of the East, Contemporary Review, September 1914, pp.334-5. Brailsford's antipathy to the Serbs of the kingdom

had been heightened by the Balkan Wars but even before then in Macedonia he had been appalled by the excesses which so-called 'Serbian national feeling' could engender. What was true of Serbian nationalism was equally applicable to that of the Bulgars and Greeks. Originally sympathetic to the Greek cause, even to the extent of fighting for the Greeks in both Crete and Thessaly, there is no doubt that his experiences in Macedonia expunged any belief in the intrinsic virtues of nationalism. Indeed he came to see it as "an atrophy in the soul of man" with more than a flavour of "jobs for the boys about it." op. cit. Macedonia, London 1906, pp. x-xi.

(95) The New Republic, February 13th 1915.

(96) Labour Leader March 11th 1915. Similar sentiments were later voiced by Sydney Low in the Atlantic Monthly and Lord Milner who often used Low's journal to disseminate his own comparable ideas. Milner in fact regarded the creation of not only a Czechoslovak state but also a Yugoslav and a Roumania enlarged by Transylvania "as impracticable and indeed of dubious desirability." The History of The Times, iv, p.328 et seq. Vide also, D. Chapman Huston, The Last Historian. A Memoir of Sir Sydney Low, London 1936.

(97) A League of Nations, pp.107-9. With the accession of the Emperor Karl in 1917 Brailsford was convinced that the creation of a South Slav state within the Monarchy was now on the agenda of the day and while the Entente Powers were duty bound to restore the independence of Serbia and Montenegro, nevertheless, "if Austria were to make an attractive offer of any kind of degree of union, the Serbs of Belgrade and Cetinje must be free to accept it or reject it, as their interests dictate." And indeed Brailsford called upon British statesmen to recognize that the most effective barrier to German imperialism was not an "aggrandized Serbia" but a "federalized Austria." The New Spirit in Austria, The Contemporary Review, August 1917, pp. 134-35. Cf. Low: "The break up of Austria would make Prussianized Germany the only strong power between the Baltic and the Mediterranean. She would be free from contact with another great and partly Germanic state, which has indeed lately shown itself her subservient tool, but is nevertheless always her potential rival." op. cit. Wilfred Frest, Peace or Partition, London 1978, p. 81.

(98) Nation, August 29th 1914.

(99) Woodley Thompson, 'Nationality Problems: The Germans in Bohemia', UDC, December 1918.

(100) Norman Angell, 'The Ideas which are the Foundations', p.16 vide also the letter of G.L. Dickinson in the Manchester Guardian, August 7th 1916.

(101) ibid. Norman Angell.

(102) Call, June 7th 1917.

(103) The Times, August 26th 1914 and September 4th and 25th 1916.

(104) The Times, November 10th 1914.

(105) The Times, October 6th 1916.

(106) op. cit. Lloyd George, War Memoirs, I. p.31, London 1920.

(107) ibid. 31-50; History of The Times, IV, p.320.

(108) Manchester Guardian, September 29th 1916.

(109) The Times, August 21st 1916.

(110) James Bryce, Essays and Addresses, London 1918, p.14. vide

- also W.G.S. Adams, *The Responsibility for the War*, Oxford 1914, p.19.
- (III) *The Times*, August 1st 1914.
- (II2) *The Morning Post*, July 27th 1914.
- (II3) Tih. R. Georgevitch, 'Kosovo 1389', in *Kosovo Day Committee, Kosovo Day (1389-1916)*. London 1916, p.9.
- (II4) *The Value of Small States*, Oxford 1914. p.15.
- (II5) *ibid.*
- (II6) James Bryce, *Essays and Addresses*, London 1918, p.157.
- (II7) A.E. Zimmern, *Nationality and Government*, London 1918, pp.70-71.
- (II8) *ibid.*
- (II9) C. R. Buxton, 'Nationality', in C.R. Buxton (Ed) *Towards a Lasting Settlement*, London 1915, pp.50-1.
- (I20) *New Statesman*, November 2nd 1918.
- (I21) *ibid.*
- (I22) *ibid.*
- (I23) 'V' 'What will be Austria's Future?' *Fortnightly Review*, CIV (1915), 55-69.
- (I24) Sydney Brooks, 'The Future of Austria-Hungary', *North American Review*, CC(1914), 194-202; *ibid.* *The New Europe*, *ibid.*, 670-672.
- (I25) *ibid.*
- (I26) Harry H. Johnston, 'Germany, Africa and the Terms of Peace', *Nineteenth Century*, LXXVII (1915), 752-767.
- (I27) Harry H. Johnston, 'Austria and the Way Out', *Living Age* CCXC (1916), 629-631.
- (I28) J.A.R. Marriott, 'Some Issues of the War', *Nineteenth Century*, LXXVI (1914), 1377-1394.
- (I29) Marion L. Newbiggin, *Geographical Aspects of Balkan Problems* (New York, 1915), pp.232-236.
- (I30) *ibid.*
- (I31) *Morning Post*, November 20th 1914.
- (I32) Letters to the *Morning Post*, January 15th and May 28th 1915.
- (I33) *Manchester Guardian*, January 19th 1915. This was a common sentiment at this time. Thus a letter writer to *Everyman* could declare without embarrassment: "My inquiries in Hungary, extending over many years, have compelled me to form the opinion that the oft-repeated and fashionable charge of persecution of the sub-nationalities by the Magyars has no solid foundation in fact." *ibid.* November 27th 1914.
- (I34) *New Age*, September 26th 1918. Warnock's knowledge of the real state of affairs in Hungary was in fact minimal otherwise he could scarcely write "like all nations bordering the sea, the Hungarians became Liberal more rapidly than their inland neighbours." *New Age*, June 27th 1918.
- (I35) Letter to the *Morning Post*, May 13th 1915.
- (I36) *vide* in particular, Seton-Watson, *Roumania and The Great War*, London 1915, pp.68-9. Cf. Francis Gribble, 'Czech Claims and Magyar Intrigues', *Nineteenth Century*, March 1917, p.579.
- (I37) *Racial Problems in Hungary*, London 1908.
- (I38) *Morning Post*, November 11th and 18th. Also December 5th 1914.
- (I39) *ibid.* April 16th 1915.

- (I40) *ibid.* July 10th 1915. Vide also July 14th 1915.
- (I41) *ibid.* May 17th 1916.
- (I42) *ibid.* November 27th 1914.
- (I43) *ibid.* August 3rd 1916.
- (I44) *ibid.* December 19th 1914.
- (I45) *ibid.* April 28th 1915.
- (I46) *ibid.* December 12th 1914.
- (I47) *ibid.* February 25th 1915.
- (I48) *ibid.* August 22nd 1914.
- (I49) *ibid.* June 5th 1915.
- (I50) *ibid.* January 13th 1915.
- (I51) *ibid.* August 23rd, 24th, 25th and 28th 1916.
- (I52) *ibid.* September 15th 1916.
- (I53) *ibid.* August 22nd 1914.
- (I54) *ibid.* April 21st 1917. 1917 was to see the publication of an extremely pro-Magyar History of Hungary by Arthur Yolland who argued that the Magyars had historically been the guardians and promoters of Western civilization in what was intrinsically a barbaric part of Europe. Thus, he argued, "it would be a sad day for Europe if their hold were ever to be relaxrd" since the land between the Danube and the Carpathians had been "purchased with their blood and with their blood they have kept it- kept it for the sake of Europe and European culture." A.B. Yolland, Hungary, London 1917, p. v.
- (I55) Morning Post, May 24th 1917.
- (I56) Both published in London in 1916.
- (I57) Everyman, October 13th 1916.
- (I58) Pall Mall Gazette, October 26th 1917.
- (I59) The Times, December 2nd 1914.
- (I60) *ibid.* January 7th 1915. Vide also Francis Gribble, 'Czech Claims and Magyar Intrigues', Nineteenth Century, March 1917, pp. 579-92.
- (I61) The Times, February 25th 1915.
- (I62) The Times, Hungary and the War, London 1915.
- (I63) Edward Grey, Twenty-five Years (2 vols, New York, 1925), II pp. 157-8 and 165.
- (I64) *op. cit.* Benckendorff to Sazonov, September 28th 1914, Hoetch, Vol VI (I), No 329.
- (I65) *op. cit.* Noel Buxton and C. Leonard Leese, Balkan Problems and European Peace, New York, 1919, pp.70-72. Also The Times, September 25th 1915.
- (I66) Winston Churchill, Selected War-time Speeches, London. 1952, p.62.

NOTES TO PART II :

- (1) FO/371/364 File 20540 Memorandum, July 24th 1907, minute.
- (2) PA VIII/143 Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.43E, May 28th 1909.
- (3) Daily Mail, April 8th 1909.
- (4) PA XL/306, Ministerrats protokol, September 8th 1909.
- (5) FO/1344, Plunkett to Lansdowne, d.76, Commercial, September 12th 1903, minute.
- (6) FO 120/786, Lansdowne to Plunkett, t.1. commercial, September 14th 1902.
- (7) FO 120/800 Lansdowne to Plunkett, d.3. commercial, January 13th 1903.
- (8) MSS Hardinge to Aehrenthal, pte., November 6th 1906.
- (9) FO 368/3, Thesinger to Plunkett/Grey January 25th 1906, Foreign Office to Board of Trade, February 20th 1906.
- (10) The British financier, Sir A. Blennerhasset had inquired about the view would be and was told the Foreign Office was "deeply unsympathetic" with Crowe intimating that the money could even be used for building Dreadnoughts. FO 371/825, Blennerhasset to Tyrell and memorandum by Tyrell, September 26th 1910.
- (11) ibid, Howard to Grey, d.67, October 17th 1910.
- (12) M. MSS K. iv Tagebuch, March 26th 1905.
- (13) FO 371/557 Carnegie to Grey, d.201, November 28th 1908 minute.
- (14) PA VIII/139 Aehrenthal to Mensdorff, d.1649, November 14th 1907. The fact that Aehrenthal was prepared to receive them shows he was anxious to be on good terms with the British.
- (15) M. Anderson: Noel Buxton, A Life, London 1952, p.80.
- (16) New Statesman, January 27th 1917.
- (17) Conwell Evans, Foreign Policy from a Back Bench, 104-1918, London 1932, p.137.
- (18) PA VIII/128, Mensdorff to Glochowski, d.56B. October 28th 1902.
- (19) THE TIMES, May 6th 1909.
- (20) PA VIII/143, Szechenyi to Aehrenthal, d.39, May 10th 1909 and PA XII/358, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.58C, October 17th 1908
- (21) ibid.
- (22) ibid.
- (23) Mensdorff to Goluchowski, PA/VIII 132, d. March 29th 1904.
- (24) C. MSS. Nicolson to Cartwright, pte., October 2nd 1911.
- (25) PA VIII/143, Tarnowski to Aehrenthal, d.70A, October 1st 1900.
- (26) PA VIII/130, Mensdorff to Goluchowski, d.35E, July 3rd 1903.
- (27) PA VIII/142, Aehrenthal to Mensdorff, pte., June 19th 1908.
- (28) PA VIII/135 Mensdorff to Goluchowski, d.42F, July 28th 1908.
- (29) PA VIII/358, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d. 61G., November 27th d.69.
- (30) H. MSS. X, Goschen to Hardinge, pte., May 23rd 1907.
- (31) FO 371/555, Goschen to Grey, d.173, November 5th 1908, minute
- (32) Hansard V.8. cc. C24-50, 648.
- (33) PA XII/369 Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.66, November 4th 1911.
- (34) Westminster Gazette, October 11th 1911, PA VIII/143. Tarnowski to Aehrenthal, d.73B. October 12th 1909.
- (35) H.W.Steed, The Habsburg Monarchy, pp.194 et seq.
- (36) M. MSS. K. iv. Tagebuch, December 17th 1908.
- (37) ibid. June 10th 1910.
- (38) ibid. June 19th 1910.
- (39) FO 371/166. Goschen to Grey, d.56, May 18th 1906.; H.W. Steed, The Habsburg Monarchy, p.198.

- (40) H.MSS. XV. Cartwright to Hardinge, pte., January 19th 1909.
- (41) PA XII/346, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.13d, March 6th 1908.
- (42) Far from supporting Germany the Sonn und Montagszeitung for one issued a stern warning to Berlin on May 15th saying: "Stop making trouble." FO 120/883, Cartwright to Grey, t.451, May 1911.
- (43) G.MSS Austria, Russell to Tyrell, pte., January 8th 1909.
- (44) FO 120/873 Lowther to Grey, d.609, August 29th 1910 copy.
- (45) Anna A. Benna: Studien zum Kulturschutz Österreich-Ungarn in Albanien, Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs 7, pp. 13-46.
- (46) FO 371/1046 Cartwright to Nicolson, pte., February 3rd 1911.
- (47) FO 120/883 Crowe to Akers-Douglas, pte., April 6th 1911.
- (48) FO 371/166 Goschen to Grey, d.56. May 18th 1906.
- (49) FO 371/828 Cartwright to Grey, d.107, July 7th 1910.
- (50) L.MSS Austria, Plunkett to Lansdowne, pte., June 5th 1902.
- (51) Neue Freie Presse, March 29th 1904.
- (52) ibid. December 18th 1905.
- (53) FO 371/364 De Sachs to Grey, June 21st 1907. (The paper had been founded by M.Szeps, a wealthy Hungarian Jew, and a close associate of the Crown Prince Rudolph, whose articles he regularly published.
- (54) FO 371/166 Goschen to Grey, d.56. May 18th 1906.
- (55) ibid.
- (56) M.MSS K iv. Tagebuch, December 31st 1905.
- (57) L.MSS Austria, Goschen to Lansdowne, pte., December 1st 1905.
- (58) H.MSS X Goschen to Hardinge, pte., May 23rd 1907.
- (59) The Times, August 15th 1907, p.9.c.1.
- (60) Paul Cambon told Hardinge that Aehrenthal was trying to exclude both Britain and Italy from the Balkans while Pichon said that Austria-Hungary was acting as 'the cat's paw' of Berlin in order to break up the Anglo-French entente. H.MSS Memorandum, May 27th 1907.
- (61) C.MSS HARDINGE to Steed, pte., May 11th 1909 copy.
- (62) PA VIII/146 Aehrenthal to Mensdorff t.44, June 22nd 1910. Cartwright's support for Aehrenthal in this matter was badly received in London but Cartwright remained unrepentant saying: "If Steed had been a Czech he could not have shown more violence in his systematic attempts to belittle the Austro-Hungarian government." G.MSS Austria ii, Cartwright to Grey, pte., June 24th 1910. Obviously The Times and Steed, their Vienna correspondent had 'considerable pull' since Crowe was provoked to write Cartwright an extremely caustic letter saying: "We do not want to get mixed up with The Times or start criticizing them." FO 371/827, Crowe to Cartwright, pte., July 1st 1910.
- (63) PA VIII/145 Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.37C. June 24th 1910.
- (64) Neue Freie Presse, June 20th 1910.
- (65) FO 371/827 Cartwright to Grey, d.93. June 21st 1910.
- (66) C.MSS Tyrell to Cartwright, pte., July 26th 1910.
- (67) ibid. Cartwright to his father, July 1st 1910 and Cartwright to Lowther, pte., March 17th 1911.
- (68) PA XII/147, Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.5c, March 17th 1911.
- (69) ibid.
- (70) PA XII/345 Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, d.5c. February 8th 1908.
- (71) Hantsch, Berchtold, 1. p.175.
- (72) Contemporary Review, October 1907.
- (73) Bd. MSS Dillon to Berchtold, September 4th; Aehrenthal to Berchtold, September 10th 1909.
- (74) Fortnightly Review, September, November 1909.

- (75) FO 371/758 Russell to Grey, d.172 October 25th 1909 minute.
- (76) H.MSS XVII Hardinge to Nicolson copy, November 10th 1909.
- (77) V(illiers) MSS FO 800/32 Vambéry to Villiers, October 20th 1907, May 8th 1908 and FO 800/32 Vambéry to Villiers, November 15 November 28th 1908.
- (78) On July 31st the Standard published Friedjung's assertion that at Ischl the British had tried through the King "to induce Austria to interfere" in the naval armaments question which Hardinge dismissed as "the blackest of lies." Standard July 31st 1909. C.MSS Hardinge to Cartwright pte., August 9th 1909. Grey said that on the contrary the matter had been raised by the Austrian side. FO 120/863 pte., tel. to Cartwright, August 31st.
- (79) FO 371/600 Cartwright to Grey, d.69. April 28th 1909.
- (80) Friedjung was extremely 'miffed' to put it mildly that the documents provided to him in the Agram Treason Trial by the Ballhausplatz incriminating the leaders of the Serbo-Croatian Coalition with anti-Habsburg plots in conjunction with the Serbian government proved to be base forgeries.
- (81) H.MSS xix Cartwright to Hardinge, March 16th 1910.
- (82) cf. his autobiography, *Avenues of History*, London 1952, pp. 90-91.
- (83) Masaryk to Seton-Watson, November 30th 1915 in Masaryk in England which gives a detailed account of the founding of the journal. Cambridge 1946, p.76.
- (84) The policy was expressed in the motto on the cover: 'Pour la Victoire Intégrale' which went further than just advocating "the destruction of Prussian militarism" or "the destruction of Germany" but the emancipation of all the Down trodden people of Central Europe of which Austria-Hungary was chiefly meant.
- (85) vide Hanak, p.176.
- (86) No XVII (Dec 1914), p.83 et seq. and Spectator, August 15th 1914.
- (87) Seton-Watson et al., *War and Democracy*, London 1914.
- (88) cf. their letters to The Times, September 18th, 27th and October 29th 1914.
- (89) vide his correspondence with St. Loe Strachey, Lady Alice Shaw and Sir Herbert Warren in Autumn 1914, Cromer papers FO 633/23-24.
- (90) *Modern Austria*, Quarterly Review, October 1915, p.463 et seq
- (91) *ibid*.
- (92) Seton-Watson had impressed this view on Cromer in a letter of September 15th 1915.
- (93) *Modern Austria*, October 1915, p.463 et seq.
- (94) *ibid*.
- (95) Cromer to Evans, October 10th 1916, Records of the Serbian Society.
- (96) Observer, October 1st 1916.
- (97) op.cit. L. Valiani, *La dissoluzione dell'Austria-Ungheria*, Milan 1966, p.171.
- (98) Steed to McClare, April 24th, Speed Papers. Vide also A.J. May, 'Seton-Watson and the Treaty of London', *Journal of Modern History*, 1957, pp.42-47.
- (99) Minute on telegram by Buchanan dating back to October 7th 1914, FO 371/2008, No 57095.
- (100) Steed to Dawson, April 29th, Steed Papers.
- (101) FO 371/2376, No 51340/F.45460 of April 28th; cf. *History of The Times* iv, p.237,
- (102) Grey of Falladon, London 1837, p.299.

- (103) FO. 4/8/6 (No 56465), May 6th 1915.
- (104) FO. 371/2241, No. 115057.
- (105) P.D. Ostović, *The Truth about Yugoslavia*, New York, 1952. p.61.
- (106) Rodd to Grey, rec. November 17th 1916 (no. 231670), circulated in the Cabinet, Cab. 37/162 (November 23rd.)
- (107) vide p.vii, also note 16.
- (108) E. Grey, *Twenty-Five Years*, London 1925, p.121.
- (109) FO. 371/2163, No. 17, Grey's telegram to Buchanan, August 9th 1914.
- (110) Memorandum of August 4th 1916, Steed papers, P.H.S.
- (111) Seton-Watson, op.cit., p.116 et seq.
- (112) FO. 371/1900m, No. 58359/F. 53297.
- (113) ibid., minute by Bunsen, May 10th 1915.
- (114) Seton-Watson, op.cit., p.73.
- (115) FO. 371/2804, No. 117933.
- (116) Printed with slight abbreviation in Lloyd George, *The Truth about the Peace Treaties*, i, p.31 et seq. The original with minutes by Harding and Grey in FO. 371/2804, No. 180510.
- (117) Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, ii, pp. 833-43.
- (118) Cab. 28/2, I.C, 13a.
- (119) Cab. 23/1, WC 16 (December 23rd) and FO. 371/2805, No. 260747/f.252387.
- (120) FO 371/2806, No. 264233.
- (121) E. Beneš, *Souvenirs de guerre et de révolution*, i., Paris 1928, pp. 263-66.
- (122) H. Hanak, op.cit. p.216.
- (123) Auswärtiges Amt, Wk. 23, secret/2 No. A 2905, January 28th 1917.
- (124) ibid. marginal note.
- (125) C. Czernin: *memoirs: Im Weltkrieg*, Vienna 1919 and Polzer-Hoditz, *Kaiser Karl*, Vienna 1929, p. 317 et seq.
- (126) *Schicksalsjahre Österreichs* (Jos. Redlich's political diary) ed. F. Fellner, Vienna 1954, ii, p.185 (June 24th 1916.)
- (127) *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, Boston, 1928, ii, pp. 451-452.
- (128) U.S. For. Rel. 1917, Suppl. 1, pp. 38-40.
- (129) ibid., pp.41-42.
- (130) ibid.
- (131) vide A. Gollin, *Proconsul in Politics*, London 1964 and P. Guinn, *British Politics and Strategy in the World War*, London 1966.
- (132) *Round Table*, No. xl (june 1913), p. 409.
- (133) cf. A. Gollin, op.cit. pp. 535-37 Milner's idea for Eastern Europe were quite at variance with the agendum of Wickham Steed. Interestingly, the analogy of Habsburg and British Imperial constitutional problems was also obvious in the question of Irish dissension. The Conservative M.P. hoped that Milner's programme could be an effective answer to both, Hope to Milner, March 20th 1917, Milner papers, box 210.
- (134) ibid.
- (135) *Cambridge Magazine*, June 9th 1917, op.cit. H. Hanak, op. cit pp. 157-58.
- (136) cf. Gollin, super (13t)
- (137) *Nineteenth Century*, No. 483, May 1917, p. 1000 et seq. 'The United States and the Peace Settlement.'
- (138) ibid.
- (139) *Round Table*, No. XXXVI, March 1917, p.248.

- (140) vide Documents in The Lansing Papers, ii, p.198 et seq.
- (141) Karl was supported by his wife Zita who also had the particular personal interest of aiding her brothers Sixtus and Xavier, who were serving in the Belgian army in their aim to strengthen the position of the legitimist movement for a Bourbon restoration in France. The Emperor seemed ready to acquiesce in the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France- a key Allied demand. Interestingly, Sixtus appealed to Francophone feelings while, *pari passu*, warning of the danger that Prussian military power threatened Austria as much as France. Indeed Karl was on record in saying that "A flagrant military victory of Germany would be our ruin..A peace à l'aimable on the status quo would be the very best for us." A French translation of Karl's letter to the Foreign Minister, Count Czernin was published in *La Revue de Paris* XXXIX (1932) p.5 et seq. Sixtus went on to resurrect the idea of a political re-orientation of the Habsburg Monarchy with France à la Kaunitz in the 18th century.
- (142) Minutes of April 17th and 29th, Cab. 21/77.
- (143) Hansard, 5th series, CXIII, 1367 et seq,
- (144) FO. 371/3085, No. 186478/f. 172966.
- (145) Nineteenth Century, March and May 1917, pp. 563-65 and 1098 et seq., Spectator, January '3th 1917.
- (146) For attempts to convince Balfour cf. Paget Papers, BM Add MSS, 51239.
- (147) New Europe, ii, No. 21, March 8th 1917.
- (148) cf n.l. Hansard loc. cit.
- (149) National Review, February 1918.
- (150) Nation, October 28th 1916.
- (151) Nation, January 13th 1917.
- (152) Nation, January 21st 1917.
- (153) *ibid.* February 3rd 1917.
- (154) Hansard, 5th series, xc, 69-70. cf. A. J. P. Taylor, *The Trouble Makers*, London 1957, p.147.
- (155) Hansard as above.
- (156) *ibid.* 1189-91 (February 20th 1917).
- (157) Nation, March 3rd 1917.
- (158) *ibid.* May 19th 1917.
- (159) Saturday Review, April 21st 1917 'Austria and the Russian Revolution.'
- (160) Saturday Review, June 9th 1917.
- (161) Nation, March 31st 1917.
- (162) Saturday Review, June 9th 1917.
- (163) *ibid.*
- (164) A. May, *op.cit.* p.548. cf. Scott Papers, BM Add. MSS. 50901-09.
- (165) *op.cit.* Hanak, *op.cit.* pp. 217, 50.
- (166) Westminster Gazette, April 21st 1917.
- (167) *ibid.* May 12th 1917.
- (168) Letter was intercepted by the War Office and sent to the Foreign Office, 371/3079. F. 7661 (No 17654) minuted by Balfour This was, of course, 2 months before the revolution when the new Russian government renounced this Tsarist annexationist aim.
- (169) Steed to Theo. Russell, February 26th 1917.
- (170) *ibid.*
- (171) New Europe, April 26th 1917.
- (172) Cambridge Magazine, June 9th 1917.
- (173) New Europe, March 22nd 1917.
- (174) *ibid.*

- (175) op.cit. W. Fest, p.22.
- (176) New Europe, May 24th 1917.
- (177) Hansard, 5th. series, cxiii, 1625 et seq.
- (178) ibid Hansard, May 15th.
- (179) Ibid.
- (180) ibid. 1373.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

THE FINAL ACT-GÜTTERDÄMMERUNG

- (1) Enclosed in F.O. 371/3134, No. 88265, f.13977.
- (2) *ibid.*
- (3) F. Engel-Janosi, Die Friedensgespräche Gf. Nik. Reverteras mit Comte Abel Armand, 1917/1918, Graz 1965, p.374.
- (4) Hansard, October 20th, 1399-1904.
- (5) W.P.-37, July 9th, F.O. 371/2864.
- (6) Text in Scott, *op.cit.*, p.114.
- (7) Hansard XCVI, 1173-4.
- (8) Hansard XCVI, *ibid.*
- (9) *ibid.*
- (10) Saturday Review, July 28th 1917.
- (11) *ibid.*
- (12) Hansard, *loc. cit.*, 1181 and 1189.
- (13) Hansard, *loc. cit.*, 1847-51.
- (14) F.O. 371/3083, No. 138699/f.147980, Amery's paper dated July 27th.
- (15) *ibid.*
- (16) Memorandum on Peace Negotiations printed in full in War Memoirs, ii, pp. 1237-40.
- (17) F.O. 371/2864, No. 201851, October 19th.
- (18) F.O. 371/2864, No. 201856, October 19th.
- (19) *ibid.*
- (20) Report by Lloyd George's special envoy, Sir Henry Norman re his conversations with Painleve, August 15th, Lloyd George Papers, F/60/1/13.
- (21) *ibid.*
- (22) War Memoirs, ii, p.1285.
- (23) *ibid.*
- (24) Minute to No. 164751/f.134202, Townley to Foreign Office.
- (25) Report by an agent (Leipnik), transmitted to Foreign Office by Townley.
- (26) Cab. 23/4, WC 233, September 14th 1917.
- (27) War Memoirs, ii, pp. 1385-6.
- (28) Rumbold's tel. No. 871, December 5th 1917 filed in F.O. 371/13002, No. 238348/f. 7684, minuted by Gregory, Clerk, Hardinge.
- (29) *ibid.*
- (30) cf. T. Komarnicki, Rebirth of the Polish Republic, London, 1958, pp. 177-78.
- (31) *ibid.*
- (32) *op.cit.* A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p.78.
- (33) Rumbold's tel. No. 871, No. 28 *supra*.
- (34) Memorandum by Nicolson, December 8th 1917, F.O. 371/3986, f. 230895.
- (35) Minutes on No. 230982.
- (36) G.T. 2976, December 10th 1917, Cab. 24/35, copies in Balfour Papers (F.O. 800/200), Milner papers, box 125.
- (37) *ibid.*
- (38) Minute by Hardinge, *ibid.*
- (39) Lloyd George Papers, F/14/41/65.
- (40) Memorandum, April 29th 1917, printed in War Memoirs i, p.909 et seq.
- (41) The Times, October 25th 1917.
- (42) *ibid.*
- (43) WC 279, November 21st 1917, Cab. 23/417.
- (44) *ibid.*
- (45) Articles of November 30th and December 4th 1917.
- (46) Printed in New Europe, V, No. 64, January 3rd 1918.
- (47) *ibid.*

- (48) Smuts's accounts of conversations in War Memoirs, ii, p.1478 et seq.
- (49) *ibid.*
- (50) cf. Milner- diary, entries of December 10th and 11th 1917.
- (51) Mensdorff's report for Czernin, published as a reaction to Smuts's version in Lloyd George's Memoirs, in Berliner Monatshefte, XV, 1938, pp. 401-419.
- (52) Lloyd George Memoirs, ii, p. 1478 et seq.
- (53) *op.cit.* T.P. Conwell-Evans, p.150.
- (54) F.O. 371/3133, No. 3465/f. 2002, December 29th 1917.
- (55) *ibid*; this telegram was shown to Lloyd George and General Smuts who concurred.
- (56) A.J. Mayer, *op.cit.* pp. 261-62.
- (57) *ibid.*
- (58) Published in Nineteenth Century, March 1934, p.378. Balfour to Lansdowne, November 22nd 1917.
- (59) The Daily Telegraph, November 29th.
- (60) New Europe, No. 61, December 13th 1917.
- (61) Seymour, *op.cit.*, iii, p.232-33.
- (62) *vide* Lloyd George Papers, F/6/5/10, December 5th 1917.
- (63) Letter by Noel Buxton to House, November 12th 1917.
- (64) *ibid.*
- (65) Above correspondence from the Buxton papers, quoted by H. N. Fieldhouse 'Noel Buxton and A.J. P. Taylor's Trouble Makers', A Century of Conflict, ed. M. Gilbert, London 1966, pp. 189-91.
- (66) Manchester Guardian, December 12th.
- (67) cf. Hansard, 5th. Ser., C. 1917, 2011-2084, December 19th.
- (68) *ibid.*
- (69) *ibid.*
- (70) *ibid.*
- (71) *op.cit.*, A. Henderson, The Aims of Labour, London 1918, p.83.
- (72) cf. Sir Henry Norman's report of Painleve's record of the conversations between Armand and Revertera in Lloyd George Papers, F/60/1/13. Also report by Leipnik, a journalist of Hungarian origin who had offered to work for the Entente cause but had not actually surrendered his Habsburg loyalties. F.O. 3/1/3076. No. 97879, Townley's telegram of May 14th.
- (73) Report of the 16th Annual Conference of The Labour Party 1917.
- (74) *op.cit.*, A.M. McBriar, Fabian Socialism and English Politics, Cambridge 1962, pp. 140-41.
- (75) *ibid.*
- (76) Beatrice Webb's Diaries, 1, 1912-1924, ed. M.I. Cole, London 1952, p.33.
- (77) International Government, London 1916.
- (78) The Labour Party, Memorandum on the Issues of the War, London,, 1917.
- (79) The Call, March 15th.
- (80) *ibid.*
- (81) Scott, *op. cit.*, p.221.
- (82) WC 307a, Cab 23/13, 1, (draft minutes)
- (83) Lloyd George Papers, F/23/1/35.
- (84) *ibid.*
- (85) Dated December 30th, *ibid.* 1/89/1/12. Philip Kerr opined that "it would be one of the finest objects of Allied statesmanship to draw a liberalized Austria-Hungary into union with this concert of democratic powers."
- (86) War Memoirs, ii, p.1514.

- (87) WC 313, January 3rd 1918, Cab, 23/5.
- (88) War Memoirs, ii, p.1514.
- (89) Balfour to Cecil, December 29th 1917, Balfour Papers.
- (90) Mensdorff diary, H.H. St. A., Mensdorff Papers, pte. 4, December 29th.
- (91) *ibid.*
- (92) Scott Papers, B.M. Add. MSS 50904, January 7th and 8th 1918.
- (93) Fremdenblatt, January 7th 1918.
- (94) Neue Freie Presse, January 8th 1918.
- (95) Lloyd George, Memoirs, ii, p.74. Cecil's minutes on Skrzyński's telegram of January 11th.
- (96) *Ibid.*
- (97) Reported in a letter to Lloyd George, January 21st 1918. Lloyd George Papers F/45/9/9.
- (98) Page to Lansing, January 31st, For. Rel. Supp. i,i, p.68.
- (99) Scott, op. cit., p.246 et seq.
- (100) WC 338a February 4th, Cab. 23/16.
- (101) Mensdorff, diary entry of February 3rd 1918. Evidently the great strike at the Austro-Hungarian naval base of Cattaro had convinced Lloyd George that a revolution in Austria was inevitable. As Mensdorff sadly noted: "The Allies seem to be counting on a revolution in Austria."
- (102) I.C. 44, Cab. 28/3.
- (103) Seymour, op. cit., pp. 385-88; cf. also Mamatey, op. cit., pp.220-229.
- (104) WC 357a, March 1st 1918, Cab. 23/16. The American ambassador W.H. Page cabled the State Department in this connection saying that "Balfour hopes the President will decline to discuss a general peace with Austria alone" since "a Wilsonian peace will fall short of fulfilling the British desiderata in toto"- undoubtedly an oblique reference to Britain's commitments to Italy and Roumania etc. Page to Lansing, February 27th, For. Rel., 1918, I, i pp.140-44. Indeed William Wiseman, chief of British intelligence in the United States made strenuous efforts to ensure that any Austro-American talks did not lead to a general peace conference. cf. tels. of February 4th and 26th. Balfour Papers, B.M. Add. MSS, 497/41.
- (105) Selections from the Smuts Papers, iii. No. 829, p.65. cf. Mensdorff diary, March 3rd.
- (106) Hansard, 5th Ser; cf. 165, February 13th 1918.
- (107) WC 359a and 360a, cf. 5/6 March.
- (108) Letter to Lloyd George, March 14th 1918, Lloyd George Papers, F/43/9/10.
- (109) *ibid.*
- (110) Hansard, 5th ser. cv, 2219, March 7th
- (111) F.O. 371/3133, Nr. 35034, February 23rd.
- (112) Kerr's report on the interview, Cab. 25/1, copies in Lloyd George papers, F/89/1212.2. Milner Papers, box 1881.
- (113) H.H. St. A., Krieg 25/27. Czernin had in fact warned Skrzyński on March 4th that he suspected the Allies of 'mauvaise foi.'
- (114) Minute by Hardinge on No.62171.
- (115) op.cit., Steed, Through Thirty Years, ii, p. 116.
- (116) Scott, op.cit., p.120.
- (117) The Times, August 9th 1917; cf. Mamatey, op.cit., p.166.
- (118) Steed to McClure, June 26th 1917.
- (119) Steed to McClure, August 14th.
- (120) Edinburgh Review, October 1917.
- (121) Steed, Through Thirty Years, ii, pp.173-78.

- (122) F.O. 371/3228, No. 27697/f. 708 (tel. by Rodd of February 12th, minuted by Hardinge.)
- (123) Through Thirty Years, ii, p.183.
- (124) op.cit., Valiani, p.309.
- (125) ibid. p.389.
- (126) The Times, February 25th; cf. also New Europe, February 28th.
- (127) Text in Through Thirty Years, ii, pp.184-85.
- (128) F.O. 371/3002, No. 218943, November 16th 1917.
- (129) ibid.
- (130) The Times, January 7th 1918.
- (131) ibid.
- (132) Steed to Northcliffe, March 5th 1918.
- (133) Through Thirty Years, ii, pp.187-91.
- (134) ibid.
- (135) ibid. pp.191-6.
- (136) New Europe, May 2nd 1918.
- (137) Hansard, 5th ser., cv 117.
- (138) F.O. 371/3135, No. 75121, April 19th
- (139) Scott, op. cit., p.298 et seq.
- (140) I. Meckling, Die Aussenpolitik des Grafen Czernin, Munich 1969, p.343.
- (141) F.O. 371/3135, No. 64640, April 11th.
- (142) Scott, loc. cit., p.298 et seq.
- (143) G. Manteyer, Austria's Peace Offer, London 1920, pp. 275 et seq,
- (144) F.O. 371/3134, No. 65950, April 12th.
- (145) WC 349, February 19th & March 19th, Cab. 23/5; G.T. 3788, 3939, 3942 and 3964.
- (146) G.T. 4629, May 6th 1918, Cab. 24/52.
- (147) Minute by A.W. Leeper on Rumbold's tel. No. 104197, June 3rd 1918, F.O. 371/3135.
- (148) Letter of March 2nd, Steed Papers.
- (149) Northcliffe to Lloyd George, April 22nd, Lloyd George Papers, F/41/87.
- (150) Bertie's telegram of April 19th, F.O. 371/3135, No. 69479.
- (151) Northcliffe to Lloyd George, April 28th, Lloyd George Papers, F/41/8/8.
- (152) The Times, May 23rd.
- (153) Cecil to Derby, May 21st, F.O. 371/3135, No. 89828.
- (154) The Times, May 23rd.
- (155) Crewe House, May 27th, F.O. 371/3474. No. 99386.
- (156) I.C. 63, Cab. 28/5, May 28th.
- (157) ibid. I.C. 66, Cab. 2814.
- (158) Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg, 1914-1918, vii, Vienna 1938, p.19.
- (159) Hansard, 5th ser., cvii, 785-86, June 24th.
- (160) F.O. 371/2864, No. 207244, October 26th.
- (161) Rumbold's telegram of October 27th 1917. When Cecil took issue with Beneš's assertion that the majority of Czechs now wanted independence, Seton-Watson sent a letter to Rumbold, contradicting St. Cyres's report.(November 19th).
- (162) General Spears to W.O., February 24th 1918.
- (163) F.O. 371/3323, No. 57780/f.30420.
- (164) War Memoirs, ii, p.373.
- (165) F.O. 371/3135, No. 75654/f. 64427, April 26th 1918, No. 82126.
- (166) ibid. No. 8005, Rodd's telegram of May 5th.

- (167) F.O. 371/3135, No. 89425, May 18th.
- (168) F.O. 371/3135, No. 89425, May 18th.
- (169) Beneš: War Memoirs, pp. 374-75.
- (170) Cecil's memorandum of a conversation with Beneš on May 15th F.O. 371/3443, No. 89880.
- (171) Vide Beneš: War Memoirs, p.376.
- (172) W.O. 106/681, June 21st.
- (173) Telegram to Reading, July 18th, B.M. Add. MSS. 49692.
- (174) op.cit., Beneš: War Memoirs, p.383.
- (175) La Nation Tchèque, August 15th 1918.
- (176) Minutes of August 2nd, No. 132422.
- (177) Through Thirty Years, ii, p.232.
- (178) F.O. 371/3136, No. 161521, September 4th
- (179) Scott, op. cit., p.323, August 17th.
- (180) H.H. St. A., Generalia, ix 7.
- (181) A.J.P. Taylor, The Habsburg Monarchy, Peregrine Reprints, Harmondsworth 1964, pp. 264-65.
- (182) Steed to McClure, May 9th, Steed Papers.
- (183) F.O. 371/3136, No. 152437, September 1st.
- (184) New Europe, August 1st.
- (185) F.O. 371/3137, No. 172539.
- (186) I.W.C. 27a, July 31st.
- (187) F.O. 371/4350.
- (188) Memorandum of August 7th, Cecil Papers, B.M. Add. MSS 51105
- (189) *ibid.*
- (190) *ibid.*
- (191) *ibid.*
- (192) *ibid.*
- (193) *ibid.*
- (194) W.O. No III, MI 3 (8), filed in F.O. 371/3134.
- (195) I.W.C. 30, Cab 23/42; shorthand notes Cab, 23/43.
- (196) I.W.C. *ibid.*
- (197) *ibid.*
- (198) *ibid.*
- (199) I.W.C. 32, August 15th, *ibid.*
- (200) Text in Scott, op. cit., pp. 386-89, Scott, op.cit. Lloyd George to Balfour, September 16th, F.O. 800/200.
- (201) 'Lewis Namier': A personal Impression, A Century of Conflict op.cit., p.224.
- (202) F.O. 371/3437, No. 176260/f.7 1973.
- (203) F.O. 371/3444, No. 173441/f. 156260.
- (204) The Times, October 19th, Spectator, October 26th, New Europe, October 24th
- (205) Matmatey, op. cit., pp. 333-4.
- (206) cf. L.S. Amery, My Political Life, London, ii, 1953, p. 170. For the text of the armistice with the Monarchy vide H. Rudin, Armistice 1918, New Haven 1944, pp. 407-09,

NOTES TO THE CONCLUSION

- (1) In *The Outbreak of World War 1.*, ed. Holger Herwig, Toronto, 1991, pp. 116-125.
- (2) *ibid.* p. 124.
- (3) *op.cit.* Gerhard Ritter, *Anti-Fischer: A New War-Guilt Thesis?* in *The Outbreak of War*, p. 111. In this respect the Diaries of Kurt Riezler, Bethmann-Hollweg's young adviser have proved illuminating. In the critical weeks before the outbreak of war Riezler summed up Germany's fundamental problem as follows: "Our old dilemma with every Austrian Balkan action. If we encourage them, then they say we pushed them into it; if we discourage them then it is said we left them in the lurch. Then they go to the Western powers and we lose the last reasonable ally." (Entry of July 6th 1914.) Kurt Riezler, *Tagebücher, Aufsätze, Dokumente*, Göttingen, 1972, p.54. Significantly, even when allowing for his *parti pris* position (or even a kind of 'apologia pro vita sua'), the diary reveals no deliberate plan by German policy makers to start a war let alone a scheme to dominate Europe.
- (4) *Vide* Introduction, p. xxii.
- (5) *op. cit.* Wilfred Fest, *Peace or Partition*, London 1978, p. 51
- (6) *Vide* Introduction and M. Paléologue, i, *La Russie des Tsars pendant la Grande Guerre*, Paris, 1921-22, p. 199.
- (7) B.D., ix (2) April 14th 1913, No. 849. The telegram which was addressed to Grey, was also sent to the King, Asquith, the Cabinet and the D.M.O.
- (8) *The Times*, September 25th 1915.
- (9) *op. cit.*, Fest, p. 77.
- (10) *Schicksalsjahre Österreichs* (Political Diary of J. Redlich, Graz, 1913, i, p. 196.
- (11) F.O. 371/3437, No. 176260/f7. 1973.
- (12) *ibid.*
- (13) As reported by Sixtus in Manteyer, *op. cit.* pp. 115-117.
- (14) *ibid.*
- (15) *The Fremdenblatt*, January 7th 1918 and the *Neue Freie Presse* January 8th 1918.
- (16) Recorded in O. Malagodi, *Conversazioni della GUerra 1914-18*, ed. B. Vigezzi, Milan 1960, I, p. 111 and p. 142. cf. Valiani, p.2.
- (17) Memorandum by J. Bailey, November 28th, F.O. 371/4354.
- (18) *The Dissolution of The Habsburg Monarchy*, O. Jaszi, Praeger, New York, 1954, p. 17.
- (19) *Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg, 1914-1918*, vii, Vienna 1938, p. 19.
- (20) *op. cit.* Sir Bernard Pares in *Seton-Watson and the Making of New Europe*, London, Methuen, 1981, p. 120.
- (21) F.O. 371/3421, April 21st 1918.

NOTES TO
AUSTRIA-HUNGARY'S ECONOMIC AND
COMMERCIAL SITUATION (1885-1914)

- (1) F.O. 371/827, Howard to Grey, No. 34, April 22nd 1910.
- (2) Aehrenthal MSS., Karton I, Biegeleben to Aehrenthal, February 26th 1899,
- (3) *ibid.*, Baernreither to Aehrenthal, June 27th 1903.
- (4) F.O. 7/1355, Johnstone to Lansdowne, No. 2, commercial, January 10th 1904.
- (5) *ibid.*, Johnstone to Lansdowne, No. 3 commercial, January 11th 1904.
- (6) Studien zur Geschichte der Österreichische-Ungarischen Monarchie, Budapest, 1961, article by T.I. Berend and Ranki, p.267.
- (7) *ibid.*, p.317.
- (8) Interestingly, however, after the successful resolution of the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis in 1908/9 a large number of British newspapers like the Daily Graphic drew the conclusion that the Monarchy's domestic problems were perhaps not so much indicative of the Empire's final collapse as its "lusty re-birth." August 18th 1910.
- (9) The draconic duties imposed on the industry by the United States and Great Britain and endorsed at the Brussels Sugar Convention in 1900 practically destroyed it.
- (10) The lapse of the Alliance would have been in Goluchowski's words "a veritable catastrophe." P.A. XL/302, Ministerratsprotokoll, November 19th 1903.
- (11) Considerable pressure was required since the financially hard-pressed governments of both Austria and Hungary were in fact reluctant to pay anything at all.
- (12) Vide article: F.R.Bridge, 'Tarde venientibus ossa: Austro-Hungarian colonial aspirations in Asia Minor, 1913-14', Middle Eastern Studies, October 1970, pp. 319-30.
- (13) Aehrenthal did, however, issue a caveat: such concessions would only be made when that state "behaved" and showed "the respect due to our monarchy as a Great Power." P.A. XI/305, Ministerratsprotokoll, January 6th 1907.
- (14) Treaties were concluded with Italy, Switzerland, Serbia and Belgium in 1892, Roumania in 1894 and Japan and Bulgaria in 1896 and 1897.
- (15) F.O. 371/1296, Russell to Grey, No. 223 draft, December 29th 1911. Three times as much money was spent on beer, wine and tobacco in 1903 than on the entire armed forces.
- (16) Like their respective governments these parliamentary bodies were notoriously parsimonious.
- (17) Both Haymerle and Kalnoky complained about the damage done not only to the economy but to the political alliance between the two countries. P.A. XL/291, Ministerratsprotokoll, December 10th 1879; P.A. XL/292, Ministerratsprotokoll, April 11th 1881; P.A. XL/294, Ministerratsprotokoll, April 7th 1885.
- (18) Aehrenthal MSS, Karton 2, Jettel to Aehrenthal, December 3rd 1904.
- (19) H. Benedikt, Die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung in der Franz-Joseph-Zeit, Vienna, 1958, p. 131.
- (20) *ibid.* p.141.
- (21) F.O. 7/1303, Thornton to Plunket, No.55, October 25th 1900.
- (22) Aehrenthal MSS, Karton 2, Klepach to Aehrenthal, October 15th 1885.

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- (23) The immediate cause of the 'Pig War', in which Austria-Hungary closed her frontiers to Serbia's agricultural exports, was Serbia's refusal to rescind her decision to place a large order for arms with the French firm of Schneider-Creusot instead of Skoda in Bohemia as had traditionally been the case.

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FIGURE 1

